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PAUPERISM:

SEVEN SERMONS PREACHED AT ST. MARK'S, WHITECHAPEL, AND
ONE PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, WITH

A P R E F A C E,
ON THE WORK AND POSITION OF CLERGY
IN POOR DISTRICTS.



BY THE
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Preface.

A REPRINT of these Sermons, published originally in a pamphlet form, being called for, I add, for the information of the larger audience, a few words as to the circumstances under which they were composed and delivered, and a few remarks on the position of the Clergy with regard to public Boards and business.

These Sermons were composed and preached at the end of a six-years' residence in an East London parish. Two years in a Lancashire manufacturing town, and four years' work in the country and near London, had introduced me to the general features of the great question of pauperism. Now I had to study it under a new phase, and I soon found also from a new point of view. The new phase resulted from the condition of the pauper class; they were no longer, as in the other parishes I had worked, a minority. Pauperism was here the normal

condition of society, few families being able to get through the year without an appeal to charity in some form.

I had to study it from a new point of view. It soon became evident that the evil was far too deeply seated to be met by remedies applied to individual cases. It soon became clear that the conditions of life must be altered before one could hope to deal with the question with any prospect of success. The questions of the dwellings of the poor, of the pressure of rates, of the sanitary condition of streets, of the method of relief, these, all directly connected with the creation or the perpetuation of a pauper class, were forced on me. It will easily be believed that one who has preached what I have preached in these sermons, and who has tried to practise what he preached, was not likely to consider the public business of Boards or Vestries a common or unclean thing. Nevertheless, the business sought me out rather than I it. When I was first elected to the Board of Trustees, (the body charged in Whitechapel with the rating of property, and the investigation of claims for rating relief,) I attended rather as a matter of duty than because I supposed I should find much to do there. But as I worked at it, new responsibilities opened before me, and these responsibilities I did not

decline. Thus I became, successively, member of the Vestry, of the Board of Works, of the Committee of Works, and, finally, of the Board of Guardians.

On these Boards I came upon the question of pauperism from a new point of view. I had hitherto looked upon it from the poor man's side, and had only, from time to time, on Cholera, Relief, and Voluntary Sanitary Committees, caught a glimpse of the other side of the question. I had seen the miseries of the poor, I had become pretty well acquainted with their faults as well as their misfortunes, but I had only a vague idea of what remedies might be applied. I must confess that my eyes were opened, even wider than they had been before, to the fact that all the faults are not on the landlord's side, and that when ardent sanitary reformers preach a sudden reformation of all nuisances, they little estimate the difficulties with which public Boards have to contend, just as those who would reform the administration of the poor-law by a stroke of the pen from the central office, underestimate the difficulties of the question with which Guardians have to deal. I came from the study of the question from this side, with the conviction that our public Boards are doing a great work, that whatever their faults the education of

public business, and the force of public opinion, will by degrees correct them, and that it would be an ill day for England, if, in impatience at their errors, they were swept away.

What experience I obtained from the sources here indicated I endeavoured to throw into some parting sermons to my people; these sermons I published, without advertisement, but the kindly notices of them in the *Spectator*, the *Parochial Critic*, the *Glasgow Herald*, and the *Birmingham Morning News*, have made the first edition run out, and I have reprinted them in a more permanent form—a form which might seem more ambitious than the value of the material warrants, were it not explained under what circumstances they first saw print.

And now let me say a few words on the general question of the position of the Clergy with regard to public Boards and public business. I know that there is a wide-spread feeling that a clergyman has no business at public Boards, and that he had much better be engaged in “parish work.” The allegation that country clergymen are out of place on the Bench of Magistrates is considered to apply even more strongly to those in charge of parishes containing from 10,000 to 20,000 souls; it is

argued that a man should find work enough to do among these, without meddling with public business.

To this it must be answered, that no man can do more than a certain amount of parochial work daily. By parochial work I mean parochial visitation, which is, too, in the idea of most people, THE work of a clergyman. Let it be known that this is the very work of which most clergymen can do but little. The mere physical fatigue of visitation in close rooms, up tall staircases, is very extreme, and when to this is added the mental strain, which every one must feel, who believes that he has no more right to intrude on a poor man's room than on a rich man's parlour, which therefore necessitates a separate explanation in each case; I think that any clergyman, who can do two hours' house-to-house visitation each day, is a strong man. Parochial organization generally, especially schools, may occupy two hours more; but as a rule a clergyman will have half the day to himself, to do that "pottering" work which is not the least part of a clergyman's duty, friendly visits, and odd bits of business; or to employ over his own pursuits. Probably, if clergymen were to give their honest experience as to the value of house-to-house visitation, those who have been longest

at work would be found to set least store by it. Most men of judgment would agree that, with a changing population, a clergyman having established a footing in most of the houses, so that in cases of sickness or distress he might not enter as a stranger, would do best to confine himself to the visitation of sickness, and to such other calls, as the business of the schools, and the numberless other parish agencies, make a matter of necessity. By all means let all clergymen learn this for themselves, and if they find that the experience of their visits to the female portion of their flock (for the men are seldom to be found at home) justifies the expenditure of time, energy, or strength, as it is supposed to do, let them cleave to it. I may say however without fear of contradiction, that two-thirds of the clergy visit only the sick, and a few of their pets, and therefore practically the question is how they shall occupy that leisure which is at their disposal. How this leisure is occupied I do not care to enquire, I am only sorry to see that little of it seems to be spent in the public business of the parish. These parish meetings are, for the sake of the business men who attend them, generally held about 6 p.m., *i. e.* after the working time of clergymen, and before the beginning of their regular evening engagements. I have said this much to shew that the supposition

that clergymen must neglect their parish in order to attend these Boards is incorrect, but in truth I am loth to take the tone of apology for what seems to me a duty so self-evident, that, as a clergyman, I would *make* time for it—but I should like to know what people mean by neglecting the parish. What is the parish? Is it only the poor, and the sick, and the badly dressed, on whom we can force our prayers, and our talk, just because they can't, or won't, refuse to hear us? Granted they need the kindly word and the helping hand most, is all that can be done for them to be done by visitation? And are there not others besides, the large shop-keeping and business class, towards whom we have a duty, whose influence it is most hard to gain, whose confidence, when won, is, for all working purposes, most valuable?

For myself I can say, that when I was thrown with this class on public Boards, and found that I was able to make my way with them, I felt that the result was worth the sacrifice of a great deal of time and leisure. The work on public Boards was certainly in seeming as little clerical as you could find; to make rates, to hear appeals against rates, to settle the valuation of property, to look into drainage and ventilation, to see after the cleansing and repair of streets, to sit hour after hour while the

routine of relief is gone through, and then to adjourn to the discussion of finance, all this may seem unworthy of those who are called to so high a profession; but first, it is work which it is the duty of citizens to undertake, and a clergyman does not lose his position as a citizen because he becomes a clergyman, though, too often, he exercises only the right of a citizen in voting, and forgets his duties in working. But, secondly, I contend that he is doing real clerical work in these matters. Business may be done in many ways, and there are more bad ways than good ways. When I first went on to a public Board I had formed that exaggerated notion of their evils which is gathered from the press, and had fancied them to be mere organizations for jobbery and corruption. A short experience convinced me that, though much connected with the bestowal of public appointments was conducted on that principle of interest which seems to govern all official patronage, yet that the great mass of the work was most carefully and conscientiously done, by men who gave up to it time and labour at a cost little estimated. Still, it is not to be supposed that there was no room for improvement, and I do not think that any set of men are more conscious of their deficiencies, or welcome more cordially those who have the advantages of wider cultivation, than the public men on such

Boards ; and I must say that, however well educated the members of a Board may be, there can hardly be one where a clergyman would have nothing to teach. If my religion taught me only how to get on to the world beyond I might possibly be out of place, or, at any rate, have little to teach ; but if I learn by it to do my duty as a citizen, just because I am a member of a larger kingdom, then I have a message to carry to the business Board, a message which I shall deliver, not by preaching or text quoting, but simply by trying to shew in myself an example of courtesy, of good breeding, of perfect impartiality, of rigorous fairness, of plain straightforward right-doing. This message is needed at West-end as well as at East-end Boards, needed not only in the middle class but in the upper class, at county as well as at city Boards, on the Bench of Magistrates as well as at the Board of Guardians. And a clergyman who goes to this work must be well ware how he goes, must not go to win the favour of the dinner-givers of the upper class, or of the wire-pullers of the middle class—must go, fearing no man, and dreading nothing, but lest his earnestness should blind his judgment, or his firmness be warped into obstinacy. At such Boards a clergyman has sometimes hard work to do. Local magnates will be tyrants, and when tyranny interferes with the liberty of others, it is a sacred duty

(a duty to which, thank God, the clergy have never been wanting) to do all we can to suppress it; indeed, one of the reasons alleged against the appointment of clergymen as magistrates has been the unpleasantness which arises between them, their equals and their inferiors, from the faithful discharge of their duties. A quarrel with the Squire may be a very unpleasant thing, but surely better that he should quarrel with the clergyman than that he should have his own way without opposition from any one. In public business, in the same way, a clergyman may make himself enemies by firm opposition to wrong-doing—but I never learnt that our religion was one which professed only to bring peace on earth—and further, such enemies often prove, in the long run, to be friends, who needed only a little wholesome opposition to bring them to a better mind. This much is certain, that men of business do as a matter of fact disagree at Boards and still get on together; this is at least a fact in my experience, that though I have had to quarrel with men of position because of their tyranny, and to assist in the punishment of the poor because of their recklessness or wrong-doing, I never found that among small or great I ever lost the good opinion of those who, notwithstanding their ill-doing, had anything in them which made their good opinion worth having.

But, whilst I maintain that a clergyman is only doing his duty to the middle classes in mixing with them on public Boards (their occupations at other times making it almost impossible for him to see them), I am equally certain that he is doing his duty towards his poorer friends. Something may be done by direct teaching and preaching for the mitigation of vice and misery, but these, as I have said before, are not wholly the consequences of moral ill-doing. He who would wish not merely to mitigate the symptoms, but to cure the disease, must give much attention to the causes of physical disorder. It is in the investigation of sanitary defects, in the application of sanitary remedies, that is to be found one great method of extirpating that enfeebled condition of body which is the parent of vice, as well as of sickness. One must sit at these Boards in order to know how, in remedying the evils, to apportion the blame between the landlord and the tenant, and though I learnt that the landlords were not the only culprits, yet, in Boards formed mainly of owners of small house property, there were sure to be members who set their faces against wholesome reform, and who for a long time managed to obstruct improvements. In fighting the battle of the poor, in coming to the aid of the independent few, who had long been fighting a hard battle, I felt that I, as a clergyman, was making

good use of my opportunities. Again, in dealing with distress, a clergyman may, as many of my brethren do, attack the disease in its symptoms—this in itself is good work ; it is well to do all we can to relieve pain and suffering, where it is actually in existence, to get up relief committees, and to distribute charity. But surely it is better work to strike at the root of the evil, to go into the causes of misery, and to try so to alter the condition of the poor, so to modify the laws which govern their existence and their relief, as to prevent a recurrence of the evil. The only argument which could meet this statement would be one which would shew that, as in the case of medicine, there were other men to do this kind of work ; my own experience points in the opposite direction, and sometimes when I have been utterly downcast at the little result of directly clerical work, I have thanked God that in these Boards I found a sphere of usefulness which thoroughly justified my position as an East-end Vicar. Those who read these sermons will not think that I considered it my work at the Board of Guardians to act as counsel for the poor ; only I tried, as far as I could, to put matters on a sounder basis, to be as kind as one should be who had to bear to man the message of inexhaustible forgiveness, to be as stern as one should be who had to tell the story of the inexorable rigour of law.

In such work I believe that other clergy will, like myself, find reward. To do it a man must go, not as a clergyman, *i. e.* not with any idea of what is due to his position, he must go content to be on equal terms, and to make his way by degrees from the listener's place, to take his share of the work, of the routine, of the drudgery, to be useful and not merely ornamental. Above all, since the great vice of uneducated men is nepotism, he must purge himself of all partiality and especially of that kind of partiality for those "of the household of faith," which mars the influence of clergymen so much among men of business, that kind of spiritual nepotism, which makes them put forward for office or for relief such and such an one, because he is a church-goer or a communicant, not because he is the neediest, or the readiest.

If in this preface I have spoken of the work of the clergy as above that of the laity, I hope the sermons which follow will correct that impression; only, as a clergyman, I magnify my office, and speaking to my brother clergymen I have ventured to point out how the very nature of their office qualifies them to set a high tone before those with whom they work; but I think they will often have to confess that they have to learn as well as to teach. For myself, I can honestly say, that if I had my wish, it would be that

I might always shew so consistent a love of right for right's sake, so conscientious a discharge of duty for duty's sake, as was exhibited by more than one member of the Whitechapel Board—by one pre-eminently—I would that the name of Robert Gladding were known as widely as his labours for the public good deserve; such men live to shew to clergymen, as to laymen, what high principles may influence public business.

To these Sermons preached at Whitechapel, I have added one preached before the University of Oxford. Out of my parish, as in my parish, I have striven to vindicate the use of the pulpit for other than theological topics, and it is principally with the hope of stirring up others to like work that I first printed, and now reprint, these sermons.

BROOKE LAMBERT.

New University Club, S.W.

13th May, 1871.

Pauzerisnt, Man's fault, not God's ordinance.

September 11th, 1870.

DEUTERONOMY xv. 11, and parts of 4, 5.

11. "The poor shall never cease out of the land," *****
4. "Save when there shall be no poor among you." *****
5. "Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe to do all the Commandments which I command thee this day."
-

People often have the first of these texts in their mouth, never the second. They accept it as an ordinance of God that the poor are never to cease out of the land. They forget that Moses had looked forward to a time of plenty so great that there should be no poor in the land; and this in no mere figure of hyperbole. He had looked forward to a period of material prosperity, based on an advance in moral progress; only when they should hearken to the voice of the Lord, to observe to do all his commandments.

True, he seems soon to have recalled his words, but that was only because his foresight as a statesman, as a judge of human nature, taught him that the people never would obey the commandments of the Lord, and therefore poverty would, as a matter of fact, be ever existent; that result he contemplated only as an inevitable necessity, because he could not trust his people to adopt those measures which would avert it. Now, at a time when the question of pauperism presses heavily upon us, I wish to call your attention to these two passages; I wish to remind you that this tremendous evil is capable of palliation. It is still, I believe, true that pauperism—(I call pauperism that hopeless condition when poverty, which is in itself an inconvenience rather than an evil, has become chronic, and has left the sufferer without hope and without self-respect)—might be extinguished if men would only keep the commandments of the Lord; but as they never will do that, we must only expect to be able to palliate the evil, by teaching men that pauperism owes its rise to a breach of God's laws. If we do so, we shall put new hope in the heart of the philanthropist, and new hope, too, in the heart of the poor sufferer. Philanthropists will no longer be crushed beneath the weight of despondency which overwhelms those who consider pauperism an inevitable necessity, the poor will no longer be depressed by the hopelessness which crushes those who believe themselves to be

the subjects of a cruel fate. Therefore, let us consider together how the keeping of God's commandments can result in the extinction of pauperism.

When we look at what those commandments were of which Moses spoke, we find them to consist of two kinds. There are many commandments in this book of Deuteronomy which refer to the spiritual life of the people, many which refer only to their social and political life. The passages I have quoted, for instance, come in the midst of a chapter about debtors. The next chapter, xvi, is one wholly devoted to religious feasts. It is impossible in reading through the book to sever between the moral and social, and the sanitary and the political, so as to give one importance above the other, so far as regards the manner of their delivery; the ten commandments are separated in their delivery from the rest, their kindred precepts are mingled without distinction.

There are first the laws relating to spiritual matters, prominently among which stand forth the ten commandments. The connection between the breach of these and poverty is so evident that we need hardly dwell long on them; if men only loved God as they are taught to do in the first table, if they only learned to love their neighbour as they are taught to do in the second, it is certain that the misery of the world would be reduced to a minimum. The first table

rests on a foundation of worship. The first commandment dethrones from the position it naturally occupies, Self, whether it be worshipped under the form of riches, or comfort, or pleasure; it enthrones in its place God—not many gods, after the heathen fashion, leaving it to the worshipper to choose that god to which he has most natural affinity, and to perfect himself in those characteristics which that individual deity represents, and then to consider his work of worship over. It teaches us of one God so far above us, combining in one person so many excellencies, that it provides for illimitable interminable progress. The second commandment provides against that instinct of superstition which has always been at hand to degrade worship. It is a witness against the fetichism of religion which attaches a peculiar sanctity to any particular object, place, or ceremony, in which God may be more especially supposed to be present. The third commandment seems designed to counteract a pantheistic notion of God as a principle rather than as a person, to cultivate worship by teaching us a veneration for the name of God. The fourth commandment establishes the relation of work and worship, and testifies against that spirit of morbid devotion which would reduce religion to worship, as against that spirit of worldliness which would exclude worship from this work-day world. The second table rests on the principle of the subordination of self and selfish

interests to the good of society. The fifth commandment establishes that principle of subordination which runs through all government—it arises naturally in a family, and the conditions of family life are reproduced in the life of the nation. Four other commandments follow, in each of which man is taught to subordinate his own desires to the good of society, is warned against injuring others by indulging, at their expense, the gratification of his anger, his love—against benefiting himself to their disadvantage, by attacks on their property or on their character. And then comes the tenth commandment, which deals with the thoughts as well as the actions, and bids man, for the good of society, to subordinate even his wishes to the common good. The other precepts in the book of the same nature with the ten commandments, either fall directly under these heads, or relate to those ceremonies which were designed to cultivate a habit of mind, such as would naturally delight in these laws.

The compendium of the two tables, “Thou shalt love the LORD thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul and with all thy strength,” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” has been given us by CHRIST Himself, who has told us that on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. The mistakes that have been made have arisen out of an endeavour to hang the table of

duty on one of the nails only, in which case it has necessarily hung awry. Religious men have fallen into the mistake of the Jews of old, and have thought that they could carry out the law of Corban, and put themselves above human duties and the calls of society, by pleading devotion to God—that they could set themselves above law by pleading that they were acting for higher interests than those which governed the politician and the man of business, and therefore were not bound by the laws of morality and honesty, which ruled most men. Moralists and philosophers have endeavoured to hang the table of duty on the second nail only, to do away with worship, and preach duty only, but they have apparently forgotten that there have been systems of morality, in letter noways inferior to Christianity, which have not influenced the world, because the motive supplied by the first table has been absent.

Now, it is, as I have said, manifest that if both these tables of the law were kept, pauperism would vanish. A man who had learnt the meaning of worship, would have a sense of dignity which would put him above condescension to those baser tastes which lead men to ruin. Even if misfortune made him poor, he would never become a pauper; at work he would wear the uniform of the SON OF MAN, and carry himself as his leader did. A man who has learnt the

principle of subordination, who has learnt to think how his conduct will affect others, will determine never to gratify himself at their expense, and will certainly avoid those habits which are the the parents of poverty and ruin. Going back to the time when all men were equal, we see that comparatively few have lost their estate by unavoidable calamity—it has not been storm, tempest, famine, or external misfortune, which has ruined most; those who have fallen out from the ranks in the battle of life, are those who have been reduced to weakness and sickness by their own self-indulgence, or the treachery of their fellows. If men worshiped God truly, they would neither be the subjects of crime, nor the parents of crime; if they loved their neighbours truly, they would neither be the authors of ruin, nor the subjects of ruin. The keeping of the commandments of God would keep them from the temptations to sin and wrong doing, which are in nine cases out of ten the cause of poverty; and if they inherited the misdeeds of their fathers and became the subjects of calamity, then the keeping of the commandments would be the key by which they would at length issue from the dungeon of misery; or else, were they doomed to remain in it, they would, by their conduct in the prison, shew men that stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage; they would, as Paul and Silas did, sing praises in their prison house—they would, as CHRIST did,

transform the emblem of shame into the symbol of glory.

So much for the laws which refer directly to man's moral condition ; but if you will read through the book of Deuteronomy, you will find that Moses did not disdain to promulgate, with the sanction of God's name, laws relating to civil, social and sanitary matters—laws which control the highest, and touch the lowest. There are laws with reference to the choice and habits of a king. There are laws with reference to the disposition of property, in the case of a man with two wives ; and the choice of soldiers in the face of the enemy. There are laws with reference to the punishment of disobedient children, and the release of those who had committed manslaughter. There are laws descending to such minute matters as the gleaning of fields, the cutting down of fruit trees. There are regulations touching such trivial matters as birdnesting, such secular matters as dress and cookery ; and there are sanitary laws, both with regard to such grave matters as leprosy, and such seemingly mean matters as the removal of the ordure from the camp. Now it would puzzle anyone to distinguish between the great and the little laws, all are promulgated with equal sanction, God's name is introduced as the author or approver of them. These laws seem to us, nevertheless, to have hardly the same origin as those of the ten commandments. The ten commandments were

written on two tables of stone, were delivered with solemn ceremonial, their kindred precepts scattered through the law have reference to all nations and all times. They are what are called moral laws. The others are said in our articles not to be binding on all Christian men, they are evidently such as were necessary for the Jews in certain circumstances of life, in certain conditions of existence.

The ten commandments no doubt existed in an unwritten form before their delivery on Mount Sinai—these other laws were the result of the experience and of the foresight of the lawgiver who promulgated them. And there are still these two kinds of law in existence. The one endorsed by revelation, the other revealed by experience. To the first, Christian men feel themselves bound to pay reverence, obedience to the latter they consider to be within their own discretion. The former refer, as they think, to their eternal condition, the latter only to their temporal welfare. They will allow that under a theocracy it might be necessary to provide for all the minutiae of life, but they think those days are gone by. I cannot accept this view of things. I believe that God has so bound up body and soul together, that the laws relating to the one condition cannot be violated without injury to the other condition. I believe that God is still ruling the world, ruling by his vicegerent natural

law, and making men feel the importance of those laws by inflicting severe penalties on those who disobey them. I find no trace in the Bible of any superiority given to the one set of laws over the other. A plain man reading his Old Testament would find it extremely difficult to distinguish between moral laws and positive precepts. In the days when God governed Israel, a man was obliged to keep his body healthy by constant ablutions, was obliged to cultivate his land according to certain customs, was compelled to dispose of his property in a certain way. The body politic and the body spiritual had their interests intermixed in such a way, that the man felt that in every act he was responsible, not to himself but to God. Nor do I find the New Testament written in a different spirit, though it was written with a different object; we have of course but a portion of our LORD's discourses recorded, and those recorded are naturally those which refer to his interpretation of the moral precepts of the law. But it must strike the most careless reader how little dogmatic teaching there is in our LORD's discourses, how much relates to our conduct in this life. And when we come to the Epistles, we shall find, if we will only read the whole, and do not quote the single verse, "I am determined to know nothing among you but JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified," that Paul treated in his Epistles of many matters concerning church government and discipline, concern-

ing almsgiving, concerning his own affairs, which would be mere waste of our valuable space, if the whole design of the Gospel was to teach us how to reach the world beyond by spiritual exercise and dogmatic belief.

The Bible is a small book, and if you were to take out from it all that does not directly relate to our spiritual condition, you would make it very small indeed. Let those, therefore, who profess such intense reverence for the book, take home at least this one lesson, that it does not concern itself only with matters relating to the world beyond. But, I believe, and I hope you believe, that God is speaking to us day by day, that the record of revelation has not been closed, and that we are learning and can learn by His teaching in the circumstances of life. We are as truly set to evidence God's dealings with men, as were the Israelites of old, and our history is written for the admonition of generations yet to come. When, therefore, any great evil exists in the world, presses itself on the attention of our legislators, presses itself on our attention by the misery which it causes, it is well for us to ask whether the misery be owing to any breach of God's laws, or rather to enquire to what breach of law it points, for misery never exists but in the breach of some law.

Such an evil is pauperism—pauperism costing the

country nearly £8,000,000 annually; pauperism which takes about one in twenty of our people and stamps him with the workhouse taint; pauperism which is raising up a class of people, miserable in themselves, dangerous to others; pauperism which reduces man to such a degree of moral ruin and physical ill-being, that it seems almost a mockery to preach to him the truths of religion. Surely, we say to ourselves, as we pass along some of our streets, God never meant mankind to pass life in such a state as this. When we walk through our back streets, and see children in misery and rags, puny, sickly mortals, incapable, as it seems to us, of any higher emotions than those which belong to the beasts that perish, save that as we look into their eyes, there is that keen, wistful, disappointed look, which tells us of a soul made for better things; then, if at the moment it seems to us as if all the difficulties we have found in dogmatic truth were as nothing in comparison with the difficulty of believing that there is a God governing this world and allowing such misery to exist unremedied—a little consideration, a little examination into circumstances, teaches us that this state of hopeless misery into which they are sunk is not an ordinance of God, but the result of a breach of His laws; a breach of His laws, not on the part of those who suffer only, but on the part of those who watch the suffering, as they stand by, whether with heavy or careless hearts. It

is very easy to discover, on the smallest enquiry, that want of education and love of drink are the two great causes of evil on the part of the sufferers ; it requires but little investigation to prove that some attention to sanitary matters, to educational wants, on the part of those who see them suffer, might alter much of this evil. A little investigation will shew that all do not remain in this evil condition, that many have sunk into it only lately, that there are thousands falling, who might be rescued by an outstretched hand, thousands fallen, who might be raised up, if, like One Whose name we bear, we would but walk amongst them, and try and raise them up.

This, my friends, is a national, this is a religious question. It is a national question, for physical degeneracy and moral contamination may ruin our nation as they have ruined others. It is a religious question, for it is useless for us to talk about church-work, when we have left the great substratum of the people untouched, with no religion which can be called worthy of the name ; and therefore do I beg you, as a congregation, to consider with me, some of the causes of pauperism, and some of the remedies which may be applied to palliate, if not to cure, the evil. We shall find, everywhere, that if only people would keep the commandments of the Lord, there would be no poor among us.

Dangerism, the fault of the Rich.

September 18th, 1870.

ST. MATTHEW, xxvii. 3, 4, 5.

“ Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us ? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.”

Doubtless, the juxtaposition of the answer of the Chief Priests, and the act of Judas which followed it, is merely accidental. We are not to infer that the act of suicide was a consequence of their callous answer to the man who, repenting of the crime to which they had tempted him, came and cast the reward of the crime at their feet. And yet the coincidence of the two is suggestive. As we fancy the man, tortured with remorse, forcing his way into the council-chamber of the Priests, we can also fancy

what might have been the effect on him, if one or other of them, as might have been expected of those whose duty it was to maintain righteousness, and to cleanse from unrighteousness, had tried to reason with the man, had tried to gauge the workings of his mind, and to see how far his act was guilty in itself, or guilty because of some accretions of personal spite; but they were all too busy with the discussion of their great plans, they were all too eager in their religious zeal for the extinction of blasphemy, to think of this one soul, and so they turned him away, and he went and hanged himself. Had one looked on him, as One looked on Peter, with an eye of kindly sympathy, he might have been saved; as none cared for him, he went out to cut off from himself any chance of repentance in this life—he added one to the number of victims whose death is due to the apathy of their betters, if it be caused by their own misconduct.

And when we come to discuss the question of how far pauperism is caused by the fault of the rich, I fear me we shall find that a heavy indictment of apathy lies against them. When we come to consider the causes of pauperism, we are struck by the fact that pauperism is not increasing in the country generally, but that it is increasing in the large towns, and especially in the Metropolitan District. When we come to enquire why people crowd into large towns,

we find that it is a commonly received opinion that wages are at such a starvation rate in the country that men naturally seek the towns, where there is at least a chance of better pay. They come up to town, they are eagerly pounced upon for service in the labour market; they oust the feebler town-bred man from works where strength is required; his children pine because he no longer brings in food enough to support them in strength, and we get a generation of flabby-fleshed, pale-faced-children, to whom work is a burden even where work is not rendered, by their number, scarce, who eventually swell that pauper class which does not love to dig, and to beg is not ashamed. And are the rich to blame for this? Ought they to pay higher wages? I know of no law, moral or religious, which compels a man to pay higher wages than the market rate of the country prescribes. I do not know how the world would go on if men did. But there are other ways of making life pleasant besides the payment of high wages, and I fear me that when we look into these matters we shall not think our country proprietors guiltless. The revelations which brought about the Union Chargeability Act of 1865 shewed how men laid field to field; and in order to save themselves from the burden of the poor, destroyed the homes in which they lived, compelled men to walk many miles to their work, and thus weakened their strength, lessened their leisure, whilst

they increased their expenditure in clothing, made them into mere machines, and converted them into a ready prey to sickness. I fear me our system of game laws, which induces the setting apart of large tracts of land, which might be cultivated beneficially by the poor, to lie waste for the preservation of game, I fear me that the system of land tenure and the jealousy of allowing a poor man to possess land (unless he buy it under the direction of a society which thereby secures his vote) lest he should spend on it labour which ought to be given to his master, or should become too independent, are guilty of making life so hopeless in the country, that men are driven by it to the labyrinths of these great towns, where all men hope to find the clue of prosperity, where so many perish in hopeless wanderings after it.

And one great charge, made by no noisy demagogue, but put by a philanthropist, whose tastes and education enable him to appreciate the virtues as well as the faults of the class to which he belongs, into the mouth of a poor man, still lies at the door of many of our rich—

“Our daughters with baseborn babies
Have wandered away to their shame,
If your misses had slept Squire where they did,
Your misses might do the same,”

Yes, it might have been apathy which for a long time kept the rich folk in our country houses from reflecting that the poor "were worse housed than their hacks and their pointers," but it was apathy as blameable as that which drove Judas to suicide. It may be mere apathy which has kept owners of house property in London from asking how the poor, driven from the country by stress of living, fare in the houses which did bring them in 20 to 25 per cent., which bring in now only a modest 15, because they have allowed them to become so nearly ruinous that it costs much to keep them in what is sarcastically called tenantable repair, and because in such a condition only tenants whose payments are extremely precarious are likely to live in them; but it was gross criminal apathy, apathy as gross and criminal as that of the receiver of stolen goods who asks no questions. All these, and the list might be increased, are violations of the great law "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." We now-a-days construe the neighbour, as the Pharisees did, of the people among whom we visit, not of those whom neighbourhood has thrown in our way. Neighbourhood, do I say, does it not seem as if we feared that if we lived near them, some such charge might be brought home to us, and do we not all, as we rise in the world, move from the place where we made our money, to a place where we may pass for gentlefolk? It is a sad thing to go to one end of

London, or any of our provincial towns, and see the rich and the well-to-do clustered together in houses spacious in themselves, and often surrounded with pleasant gardens, and to see the poor huddled together at the other end of the town, in houses whose back-yards have been converted into bedrooms, whose close atmosphere is tempered by no breathing space. That is sad, sad enough, but it is sadder to feel that this implies a separation of thought and feeling which is of comparatively recent creation. The old country gentleman at least knows his tenants, and if, like a father of the old school, he is careful not to spoil them with over indulgence, and thinks all attempts to make them more comfortable revolutionary measures which will soon upset the country, yet at least he lives among them, and they catch an insensible refinement from his presence; and so in towns, the merchants and the tradesmen in old times knew their clerks and their apprentices, lived with them, and imparted to them that cultivation which always springs from the association with those better educated than oneself—but now, men are become mere machines, bought with our money to work ten hours a day, and left during the other fourteen to ruin themselves as they will. It is no light evil which severs the rich from the poor, leaving the rich to pursue their pleasure in their own pet quarter, without even a sigh of poverty reaching them in their paradise, (save, perhaps, from one of those

miserable creatures, whom the separation has called into being, for if we lived among the poor, we never could be deceived by these spurious beggars), and consigns the poor to the dark gloom of their end of the town, with no one thing to relieve the dull monotony of their work, with one only tempting prospect of excitement—the public-house, the music-hall and the penny gaff. Do we wonder that a man falls into bad habits, when our system of labour having broken up all family ties—for the wife must work under our new system as well as the man, and if she work, she cannot make the house comfortable—we leave him to the enjoyments which he may, with his large family, find in a room ten feet square, with a blank wall his only prospect, and the riot of the streets his only music. It is worth our while to widen thoroughfares so that traffic may pass freely, it has never been worth our while seriously to consider whether we should not widen them to let air pass freely.*

But, let us turn from these evils which seem in some sort inevitable, which at least admit of no immediate improvement, in the hope that the working men

* I know of no large public improvement carried on for sanitary reasons. We need wider thoroughfares, and sometimes, to obtain it, abolish a rookery. See *Parochial Critic*, August 24th, 1870, for a paper on this subject by Mr. H. O. Sturtevant, a relieving officer.

may soon, as indeed they are beginning to do, follow the rich into the country, and let us ask ourselves how far we can, in our individual capacity, do good. How about our servants? Do we consider them like our clothes, bought to be useful, to be discarded when they are worn out, or we get tired of them; do we look on them as human beings who have souls, who may be trained to something better, who may degenerate into something worse? How often have I been surprised to find those who had been servants with houses as untidy as those who had never known more comfort; how often do I find them as little prepared for the rainy day as those who have not lived amongst a class, who, whatever their faults, do, as a rule, provide for the future? And then the answer I have given to myself as to the cause of this, has been—surely it must be because we do not interest ourselves in our servants as if they were of the same flesh and blood, as they did in the days of old, who had their servants to the same table, though they sat below the salt, as they did in those days when the apprentice wooed the master's daughter, and succeeded to his business. We cannot move time back and alter customs, and it might not be on the whole for good if we could; but we need to try more and more to feel that we have an interest in those whom we employ. That we need more sympathy with those below us was the text on which the great novelist, Charles Dickens, preached his

novel-sermons—for they were novels written with as much didactic purpose as sermons—those books whose noble purpose makes up for the viciousness of their literary style. His text ever was, that the classes of society, however widely separated, had one common meeting-ground, both in their virtues and in their foibles, and that society would be made the better by the acknowledgment of this. So long as we look on those separated from us by poverty or station as objects of patronage, or subjects of pecuniary exchange, so long all our kindly feelings will do no good.

“ Can your lady patch hearts that are breaking,
With handfuls of coal and rice ? ”

And yet we are for ever thinking that gold will do good, and forgetting that gold will not feed a hungry brother, unless it be minted, that our gifts are of no use unless they be stamped with the impress of a human face, and have the inimitable milling of personal contact.

It is this want of sympathy that has for so long put back the solution of the great question of pauperism. English law has provided that in this, as in all other things, a man who is a citizen shall have the privilege of taking his part in public affairs. And, I believe, there was a time when men did not shrink from the burden of public duties. But, nowadays, we have

altered all that, and if a man has to serve on a jury he thinks himself an illused man; and as for voluntarily giving up his time to public business, he has too much of his own private business to attend to. This dreadful plague of making haste to get rich, in order that we may make a good figure in society, has bitten us all, and if public calls interfere with private business, then they must be disregarded. And this is particularly the fault of the richer, and those who who have, with more leisure, more education. If men have wealth and leisure, then it is not public duties they wish to undertake, unless they be such as entitle a man to write the letters M.P. after his name. And so it comes to pass, that the great work of managing the poor has been too often left to hands which have made the names of the workhouses and guardians doubly detestable to the poor. That much unjust abuse has been lavished on them, that it is a far more difficult thing than most suppose, to make justice and mercy meet together in a poor-law system, I believe; but the difficulty of the task might much have been lightened if the men of least education in the land had not been left to carry on the arduous work of poor-law legislation alone. Some day, when the country suffers under a centralized system, men of education will learn to see what a valuable opportunity of self education has been lost to the country by the abolition of local self government—lost because those who might have

made the public boards self-educating, abstained from aiding them with their influence, and from offering them the results of their greater reading, and superior education. If we were Christian men, should we allow the great question of the treatment of the poor in our workhouses to be conducted by men whose names we hardly knew? Should we not, each for ourselves, burn to shew, by our attention to all the public duties to which we had admission, that we were worthy of the great honour of undertaking such a work? As I pass near our Houses of Parliament, I often think what a strange lesson is brought home to our legislators, in the fact that a hospital is erected immediately opposite to them. There it stands as a witness to the fact, that whatever the perfection of human legislation, it can never hope to abolish human misery. Almost within earshot of debate is the evil of disease, and when the great house is still, and the voice of legislation is hushed, still, day and night, winter and summer, without ceasing, goes up the cry of human suffering; but though it cannot abolish, it can palliate it. The very magnificence of the edifice, making it worthy to stand face to face with the great palace of the nation, is a commentary on the power of human energy. Medical men have done wonders, because medical men have felt deeply; and if only the iron of human suffering entered deep enough into our souls—if only we felt something of a real feeling

for the woes of mankind, we should never rest until we had done our best in the solution of this great question. Meanwhile, God is teaching us as He teaches all who break His laws. Pauperism is inconvenient now, because we have not done our duty—it may become dangerous soon, if we still hold from it.

And there is one other fault on which I shall have to speak to-day e'er I have done. There is no more striking word to me in our LORD's life than that expression of His in His last prayer, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." That He Himself should have felt that He could not raise others up unless He kept Himself up to the level of the most perfect holiness, is very suggestive. And yet there is not one of you earnest souls, who has not found the fact that your actions were watched by others, a means of help to you from time to time. You have been strong to resist temptation, because you dared not drag others down. Even the coarsest men will not swear before children—even the best men feel that the presence of the weak stimulates them to exertion. And what can we, as a nation, and as individuals, say about our application of this principle? Have the rich, have the well-to-do, set an example to the poor? Or, has this nation been so utterly given over to the love of money-making, that it has proclaimed that the one

virtue in the world is to be rich, the one crime to be poor? I am not one of those who usually take a very gloomy view of society; I believe that in some respects the state of society is much better than it was in the last century; but there is one vice of which it is not cured, which threatens to ruin it, and that is money-worship. Practically, a man may do what he likes in the world if he be rich, and there are not wanting cases of men who have felt what that meant when the tide was with them, and who have not had one hand stretched out to save them when the tide had turned, and they struggled against it. More dishonourable than the worship of the prosperous, is the desertion of the unsuccessful. And our money-love takes just the very form which sets the worst example to the poor. We first begin by living at a rate which would astonish our fathers, and then, to make up for it, speculate in a way which leaves us beggars. The style of life now-a-days, the two houses, the expensive dress and dinners, deemed necessary by every one, the way in which every one seems, as far as possible, to strive to do away with the distinction between the life of a man who has palpably £10,000 a year, and that of a man who has ostensibly only £1,000 a year, is one of the worst features of the present day. And then, when you wonder how a man with the lesser income lives so well, you understand that his money is well invested.

That means much till a panic comes, and then there are thousands ruined, and tens of thousands thrown out of work, because it was necessary for society, in living above its means, to neglect to pay its bills, and to lay by anything to meet a possible calamity. What are precisely the faults which are alleged, and alleged truly, against the poor, but this very same extravagance, this very same reckless disregard of the future. What keeps people poor, what has prevented a people, which enjoys, as a working people, higher wages than those of any other nation, from rising, is the extravagant way in which men live—is the reckless disregard of the slack time, and the rainy day. Work is, unfortunately, a speculative investment, too often because capitalists have, by their speculative transactions, made it so, and the interest that comes from labour is not a constant sum, and may be largely reduced by the reduction of labour or of the workman's strength. And we wonder the workmen do not see this; but meanwhile we are teaching them as well as we can by our example, that the opposite is the case—that if we only spend and speculate—“to-morrow shall be as this day and yet more abundant.” Let us give heed to this, that the misery and the guilt of our brother's ruin be not laid to our door. “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” that is the compendium of the law written in stone—that is the text of the law He wrote in His own life-blood. Shall we not try and copy His writing?

Panperism, the Fault of the Poor.

September 18th, 1870.

I. TIMOTHY, v. 8.

“If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

That would be thought pretty strong language for a man to use nowadays, but that is the language of St. Paul. We have so lost sight of the feeling of brotherhood in which the early church lived, that the language seems unnecessarily strong. We have cultivated individual independence to such an extent, that we have almost lost sight of common duties. But this text will serve to recall to our memory the law, which nature has enforced by the sharp teaching of suffering, that provision for the future is the duty of man. If we do not esteem it a sin against God to neglect it, that is because we very often think that God has made only moral laws, because we forget that

God made the law that fire shall burn, and falls shall hurt, just as He made the laws that we shall not steal, nor murder. We are saved some time by learning the first from revelation, we gain our knowledge of the second from experience. It is largely owing to the neglect of those laws which are taught by experience, that pauperism, so far as it is the result of faults on the part of the poor, is due. I cannot pretend to develop all the causes of pauperism which arise out of the misconduct of the poor, but I may be able to put before you one or two. It is hard work to do it. I spoke this morning of the faults of the rich, and when I think of the conditions under which the poor live, I am only astonished that they are no worse. I am not afraid of saying too hard things about the rich ; if I wound them they have at least enough to comfort them ; I do dread saying one harsh word against the poor, lest I should make their sad condition in any degree more hopeless.

I said this morning that the poor learnt from the rich to live without regard to the future. They learn from the rich to trade on their capital of strength as if it would always remain invested at the same high rate of interest ; they forget that sickness, or want of employment, will soon reduce its value. And then they cry out that wages are too small, and that constant work ought to be found them. There is no

complaint so common as that of small wages, and yet I believe it may be shewn by arithmetic that our wages in England are larger than in any other country, both absolutely and relatively. And here, in East London, we know how foreigners thrive whilst Englishmen starve, and undersell the English workman because they can live at so much cheaper a rate. I think, then, it ought to be evident that it is not mere want of larger wages that makes the working man too often degenerate into the pauper, but rather the want of method in the employment of those wages. And I believe that if only men would learn this lesson for themselves, they would be spared much of the evil which God brings on them, when, having broken this law of providence, they become subjects of punishment, in hard winters and times of scarcity. I wish men could see this, and lay the blame at their own doors. I do not like to hear men say that it is the master's fault that they get small wages; I wish I could make them understand, that a master would act on a totally different plan to that on which they themselves act, if he paid one penny more than he he was obliged. Working men know well enough that clothes are cheap because slopshops pay miserably small wages, and because the machines have taken so much work out of the hands of individual sempstresses, that the wages can never be much higher. And yet they do not refuse to buy at the slopshops, or at the places

where these goods are sold; though they know what small wages their wives get, they do not go to the shops which pay more; their only test is whether a thing is worth the money given for it, and though they are sometimes deceived by the outward look, yet, in the main, this is a fair test; and masters must act on the same principle—they will not, and would not be wise if they did, give more for labour than labour is worth. Then, if labour is worth only so much, two courses are open to a man—to go somewhere where work is better paid, or to live on what he has.

From the first alternative, a man is generally shut out by the fact that he has, without thought of the future, encumbered himself with a large family; and the second requires more resolution than most men possess—they cannot give up the luxuries to which they have been accustomed, till they have become necessities; and so, money that should go in rent, or be put into clubs, is spent on excursions and drink, and then, when the bad time comes, they are obliged to fall on public charity to keep them from starving. I am not saying that I should resist the temptation were I in their case, I am only pointing out that their condition is not inevitably as bad as it seems. They have neighbours round them, here and there, who, on the same terms, have done better, and that not because they have had more luck, but because

they have been more self-denying. We learn the truth day by day, that if men start equal in the race of life, one soon falls behind the other, for want of training. And I would we learnt oftener the lesson God teaches by failure. If we did, there would be more put by in the Savings' Banks and Clothing Clubs and in the Sick Societies. This hand-to-mouth living, this running into debt, this love of pleasure and drink, is pleasant whilst it lasts, but the reckoning is heavy to pay. When you have to pay it, my friends, pay it in want and tears, pay it in scarcity and beggary, pay it in application to the workhouse, and in the endurance of that harsh treatment, which I think of necessity belongs to such an institution, remember, you are paying a debt, don't think the terms very hard, even if it cost you your all; you have had your fun first, only, as you pay it, vow, by all you reverence, register the vow before God, and pray Him to help you, that you will never incur such a debt again.

It will naturally be supposed that I shall dwell much more largely than I have done on that one item of expenditure, drink. And yet I feel such a dread of simply echoing a charge made against the poor, that I hesitate; not that I doubt the fact that drink is the great cause of misery, not that I the least hesitate to declare that the beershops thrive in the very poorest streets, and that if, for the time, they

were shut up, people would be richer till they had invented, as most assuredly they would invent, some other vice on which to spend their money. But this is my difficulty—if I say that drink leads to pauperism, then I make a statement which is not absolutely true. There are many who drink and are not paupers, only drink is that one temptation to extravagance which most easily catches the poor man and reduces him to that helpless state of chronic misery, which we have agreed to call pauperism. But, then I think further, that we, who have never had the temptation they have had, should beware how we speak too strongly against them for yielding to it. We have pleasure, we have means of engaging our minds, we have comfortable homes; but what have they? What is a man, wearied with his day's work, to do in the one room that most families can boast? Read, with the children all needing attention, and disturbing his quiet? Talk, but of what? Go out to his friends, whose rooms are much the same as his own? He does not spend his money on expensive theatres and entertainments, he spends it on the one luxury he can obtain cheaply, which brings forgetfulness, which makes his dull life seem happy—he drinks. Oh! he is a fool, no doubt. Oh! he is sapping his constitution, he is weakening his mind, he is becoming a worse man, with less power of exerting and helping himself; but are we not all weak, are there not many

ways in which we purchase forgetfulness, with equal result of moral ruin? Let him that is without sin amongst us, cast the first stone at him. It is a terrible failing, this, of drunkenness—a failing we must meet with social, as well as religious, remedies; a failing we must try and overcome, by shewing men how, in it, they sin against their own bodies; of how they lower themselves beneath the dignity of men, and of sons of God (if they can understand that), and it is more than a failing, it is a sin—yes, it is a sin. But before I could speak of it in the same terms as drunkenness is spoken of in the scripture, I must know that the condition of those to whom words of warning are addressed is the same; certainly many passages in the Old Testament seem to be chiefly pointed at the rich; and it makes all the difference whether the rich or the poor are addressed. But I fancy that the condition of our poor, cooped up in large towns, and herded in large factories, is a condition, the like of which has not been known till lately, and it is a condition which introduces new considerations in mitigation of the grossness of the sin.

I believe the second great cause of misery among the poor is neglect of sanitary laws. It is strange how slow we are to learn these laws, they are some of those which experience teaches us most slowly, but when the old proverb says ‘cleanliness is next to

godliness,' I believe it is profoundly true. I reminded you last Sunday evening, how the book of Deuteronomy laid down, under Divine sanction, laws for the disinfection of the camp ; laws to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Supposing a man were to throw himself into a river, that would, I suppose, be a sin. Why ? Because he knows that it is a law of God, and of nature, that if he throws himself into the water, his body is heavier than the water, and he will sink. It is just as much a law of God, and of nature, that if a man lets the refuse of his ash-heap lie and fester in the sun, that if he allows the filthy vapours of his drain to ascend into his waterbutt, that if he does not keep the pores of his skin open, by washing, he is liable to disease. He may live long without it, but some day or other it will come ; he may, like some people who tumble into the water and are not drowned, escape once or twice, but he is sure to suffer at last ; and when he suffers, the illness goes through the family, and perhaps through the street. It is becoming more and more nearly certain that disease floats in the air, in the shape of little tiny germ-seeds. Suppose a seed of a flower to be blown across your garden, if your soil is dry, if it is unmanured, ten to one the seed when it settles will die ; but if it be sodden with water, if it be rich in manure, it will spring up and grow. So, in like manner disease, whether it be a germ or not, floats

about in the air; if a man be dirty in person, or if his frame be weakened by living in bad smells, the disease finds congenial ground to grow in, and he becomes ill, and, becoming ill, all his family suffer, more or less. We can speak positively as to this law, and therefore it is that we are so anxious that you should have your dust-heap emptied, and your drains kept clean. The death-rate in our country has largely decreased since sanitary precautions have been taken (it is 36 per 1000 in Russia, it is 22 with us), and that visitation of the cholera, which we commemorate to-day, is supposed to have been confined to a particular district, because the evils in the water supply had elsewhere been remedied, and had by some carelessness been allowed to remain here. Now, if these are facts, and facts at which we can as easily arrive as at the fact that, if we go out from a warm room into a keen wind without extra protection we are likely to catch cold, then we are blameable if we do not attend to them; and the man who allows his family to sicken, and himself to become ill, on account of a neglect of these laws, is right in supposing that God is punishing him; not, as some men fancy, punishing him for drunkenness by sending him fever, but punishing him by allowing the disease, which he might have averted, to sap his strength, and ravage his home. When the head of a family dies, and the family is thrown on the parish, his own carelessness

is the cause of their ruin, just as much as if he had, with his own hand, lighted a match to set fire to his house. I need not go into particulars which might be revolting, but surely it is as contrary to decency as it is to the laws of health, to keep a dead body ten days in a room in which the family live, and eat, and sleep.

And next to the disregard of sanitary laws, I place, as the main cause of pauperism, the neglect of education. Here, again, I know the poor have much to plead in excuse. When the average of wages is as low as it is now, I do not wonder, though I greatly regret, that parents find it impossible to resist the temptation to send their children out to earn a few pence, that, truly penny-wise and pound-foolish, they will, for the sake of a penny or two earned at ten years old, prevent the child from earning two or three pounds when he is eighteen years old; and if only the temptation of letting their children earn something was in the way of their going to school, I think the crime would be a venial one. A man may almost fairly plead that, under such circumstances, he is hardly to be expected to exercise such self-denial as this implies, and of course he is perfectly unable to see that he is reducing his own wages by the very means he takes to increase the wages of his family; for the introduction of juvenile labour into all occup-

ations has done more than anything else further to reduce the low rate of wages; and their exclusion would raise the general scale, the only limitation, of course, being the extent of the demand for work, executed at a higher rate of production. But this is not the only cause; the great cause is the most unpardonable carelessness. There are schools cheap enough, and if there are not schools cheap enough, there are schools for nothing, to which children might be sent, and to which they nominally go, but the children are, none the less, not there; and you find them in the street, and ask them why they are not at school, and you have some such excuse as that they have no shoes, or that they are minding baby, or are kept for an errand; and this whilst they are playing in the street, far from home. If parents valued their health, or their respectability, enough to keep them in the house whilst they had no shoes, one might sympathize with the excuses, (though the children in Scotland go to school shoeless), but they are not ashamed to let them be seen in the streets; and so, we believe it a mere excuse. And even if they could say that the child was absolutely wanted at home, that the baby could not be committed to a neighbour, or the errand done at another time, one would think the excuse, in some sort, a valid one; but here it is evidently shewn merely to cover the carelessness of the parents, who do not value education. And yet

they themselves know how much it would have kept them from wrong-doing, into how many better situations it would have admitted them, if they had received themselves a better education. Yes, I know I ought, they say—but they don't do it, children cannot be sent to school till 10.30, because mother could not get them ready before, children are kept away all day because it is not worth their while to see that they go. It is different in Scotland, where, as the child comes home, the first question is how he got on in the class; and therefore we never have a Scotch pauper in our workhouse, and therefore Scotchmen are always at the top of their profession, as serjeants, as gardeners, as merchant clerks; therefore men in Scotland work during their vacations to keep themselves at the University, and men who have been servants become clergymen and professors.

At the root of all this carelessness about the education of their children is another evil, which sadly distresses any one who goes among the poor. There is a total absence of parental rule and restraint; parents seem no longer to have any management of their children, and the threat, I will tell your teacher of you, is often used. It seems to me that this begins with the elder children, who, being contributors to the means of the family, lose that sense of respect for their parents which came naturally, or which they were taught to

connect with dependence on them, and the spirit of insubordination, once roused, is infectious. But undoubtedly the main cause of this is the condition of existence now-a-days, which compels the mother to work either away from home, or at home as hard as the father, and leaves no leisure for family duties, crushes out all self-respect, and desire for family order.* Ah! we are fallen on evil times, when the grand law of subordination of private interests to those of the family, which stands at the head of the second table, has passed into disuse. I believe, that as this is the cause of neglect of education, so also, it is only education that can restore the parent to a true sense of his duty, and the child to a true sense of his obligation. If a man provide not for his own, and especially those of his own house, in this respect, it is because he is lost to all faith, has lost that faith in his Father, which teaches him the allegiance he ought to exact from others. Ah! if men did but pray 'Our Father' with intelligence, what a different world this would be. If they would only learn of the Father, as CHRIST has revealed Him, they would be at once kept from that overcarefulness, which degrades life into ceaseless toil, (because they would feel that their Heavenly Father knew that they had need of these things), and from that extravagance which wastes its products,

* See Jules Simon's admirable work, *L'Ouvrière*.

(because after such things do the heathen seek), and in the sense that they were His children, they would go forth to do war with improvidence, and unhealthiness, and ignorance, and insubordination, which are the Uhlans, the advanced guard, of that great power of pauperism, which is spreading misery through the length and breadth of this land of ours.

* During the Prussian Campaign of 1870 the advanced guard of four Uhlans who summoned each town to surrender was proverbial.

Poverty and Private Charity.

October 2nd, 1870.

ST. JOHN v. 3, 5, 6.

“In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. A certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been a long time in that case, He saith unto him, wilt thou be made whole?

And is this the exhibition of Divine mercy? A great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt, withered, and one made whole. We become accustomed to the fact which the tradition connected with this pool represents, that when God is far off, and rules the world only by the working of certain laws, only one shall be healed out of a great multitude; then we think it wonderful that of Divine mercy one should be healed. But when God is among us, surely a new state of things will be inaugurated, surely He will not deal out with a niggard hand the bounties of his power—but, no,

He passes into the throng, He leaves the rest to their misery—He leads out of the prison only one of the captives, when He might have, when we expected He would have, released all. Are we wrong both ways? Wrong in supposing that He is farther off when He works by the general operation of laws, than when we see His presence among us? Are we to learn from this, and other like passages, that He is ever the same, whether we see, or only feel, His presence? And wrong, too, in supposing that perfect mercy would put an end to all that we consider evil, that there is an opposition between the sternness which inflicts, and the mercy that cures trouble? Wrong in overlooking the fact that mercy may wear two different aspects, that the opiate and the knife are both the ministers of the great physician's mercy. At any rate, it may be well for us to dwell on this significant fact to remind us of how little misery in the world CHRIST set right, of how many He left uncured in body, unconverted in soul. It may correct our notions on many points.

I can only stop here to remark, that in every case where a cure was effected, CHRIST seems minutely to have enquired into the personal circumstances of the case. In the abridged narratives of our gossellers, the facts attending the cures are in many cases omitted, but in the different accounts of the same event we

learn enough to assure us that CHRIST did not use His power without careful examination. And, further, there is not wanting a hint that each act cost Him something. It would, indeed, be strange if He were an exception to the law, which governs the exercise of the highest as of the lowest power, that to be useful it must cost some labour. We should hardly expect in that age, when men looked for miracles and thought the healing art was simply magic, that those who recorded CHRIST's cures would have paid much attention to the way in which they were effected. And yet there are two curious passages, one in St. Matthew viii. 17, when quoting some unknown passage of Isaiah, or altering a well-known text, the Evangelist says—"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." There may be reasons against giving to the word "bare" the full meaning of "took upon himself," and yet one is tempted to fancy that there is here a repetition of the truth represented in the old legend in our own history, of the faithful wife who sucked the poison from her husband's wound. Whilst it does not seem unnatural to suppose, that if He were indeed the Son of God, the head of humanity created in God's image, in perfect sympathy with those laws by which God governs the world, He should have had the power of healing sickness; it seems most natural to suppose that if He had such power, it would cost Him something to exert it. We all know how when we go to

those in trouble we can veritably bear their troubles, and go away, ourselves wearied, and yet having relieved them from the burden of their despondency, we can fancy some such power at work in healing physical diseases. And there is this further passage to stimulate our curiosity. In St. Mark v. 30, a woman is healed, and CHRIST is said to have perceived that virtue had gone out of Him. I am not concerned to explain or explain away the miracles. With so many things in the world around me, which I can't in the least understand, I am not surprised to find one more difficulty, and I confess myself unable to understand how, according to any laws we know at present, such a cure as this could be effected, *i.e.* a cure in which the physician did not know that he was healing the patient. What I do wish you to notice is, that in the recorded accounts, CHRIST is said to have felt that virtue had gone out of Him. This seems to witness to the belief of those who wrote, founded either on statements of our Lord, or on personal observation (most remarkable and most unlikely, as I have said, when magic was taken as a thing of course) that the cure of sickness did cost Him an effort. These are, however, only faint indications of the possibility of that which we should, *a priori*, have considered to be likely, that CHRIST did not effect His cures without cost of exertion as well as of enquiry. However, our main business is with the fact that He healed but few, and I have only added these remarks

to shew that, in the ministration to the few, He was probably governed by the same law of self-sacrifice which, in our case, is indispensable for doing good.

And now we come to consider the question why He, having it in His power to do so much good, exercised that power so sparingly. I imagine it was because He recognized so fully the value of God's education by pain and suffering. For life is one long teaching by means of this. The old proverb that "necessity is the mother of invention," christianized into "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of heaven," is a witness to men's belief that in the world outside, just as it is the Christian's belief that in the moral world, God educates by trouble. From the time when we learn the principle of balance by our early tumbles, to the time when we are admitted into the fulness of man's estate by the supreme agony of death, we are schooled in pain; from the time when we suffer from the humiliation of our first school-fight, to the time when worldly disappointment at last drives us back on the true source of comfort, we learn by trouble. And he who goes about the world-school, simply trying to staunch the tears of those who cry, without examining why the master lets them work in tears—he who wanders hither and thither, crying out on the Providence which allows men to be wounded in the world-battle, without

enquiring whether they brought it on themselves—he who, in short, tries to be more merciful than God, may think himself a charitable man, but may chance to earn the name of meddling fool.

Now, I may suppose that generally you will accept what I have said, and only differ with me in the application to individual cases. I confess myself to have learnt the whole bearing of this only during my residence here. I never understood the Pool of Bethesda till I came to St. Mark's, Whitechapel. Here we are surrounded by a great multitude of impotent folk, blind to their interests, halt as regards progress, withered as to all power of improvement. They are waiting for the moving of the water, wondering when some windfall will make them better off. Among the crowd, of course, there are a vast number who are simply hypochondriacs, who gather, as people always do at places where invalids congregâ, who fancy themselves very bad, who love to dilate on their misery and their ill fate, who know not that the slightest exertion, the merest exercise, would cure them in a moment. There are numbers of people in this parish, who look as if they needed an angel, at least, to bring about their cure, but whose case, when one enquires into their earnings, shews that the smallest thrift, the least possible amount of good management, would soon set them right. No wise doctor would deal with such cases.

If they are dealt with at all, it is because there are so few Abernethies in the moral as in the medical world, who dare to speak the truth. To help them is simply to encourage hypochondria. There remain the great number who are really ill, that great class who, living on starvation wages, have sunk so low that it needs some one, even when the cure is at hand, to put them into the water, who are so paralysed that they have lost that first and last blessing—hope. Now, it is precisely these cases that are the hardest to deal with. And did they occur, as they do occur in individual instances in small parishes, a remedy might be applied. Were they even a large minority some remedy might be employed. The system of relief by the Jewish Board of Guardians, so much lauded, succeeds where it succeeds, and it should be known that it is not always successful, not only because the best intellect is used in its distribution (that we may hope some day to obtain in our own relief), but because the numbers are limited, and form a small minority of the whole population. But when we have to deal with a mass of people, all in this chronic condition of misery, it is manifest that unless we would be guilty of the grossest partiality, we must modify our charity so that it may reach all. And when we try to do so, and to find some rules which may regulate our conduct, and make us benefactors of all, and not of a few pets, we soon find, as we enquire into cases, that there are

circumstances of improvidence, of intemperance, of ignorance, which would render our charity absolutely useless. We make some mistakes at first, and then we learn that we should commit as great an error in relieving all suffering, just because the sight pained us, as we should if we were to give a child everything he cried for. We find by experience that we do no good, that the day or week after money or food has been given the people are as badly off as before, and we learn to enquire whether we have not made a mistake in supposing that misery existed only to call out our charitable feelings, and not rather to benefit the sufferers themselves. There is sometimes in young practitioners a professional way of looking at each hospital patient as a subject for experiment—there is such a thing, also, as fancying that God made some men miserable to make others charitable. And we find this, further, that if we carry out our plans of charity, we prevent the suffering from doing the work that God intended it to do, that we encourage men in that state of helpless waiting for something to fall into their mouths, which destroys self-help, which turns men into cringing hypocrites, which makes them despise the hard task when they can so easily get bread by charity, and leads them to believe at last that riches exist in the world to feed the poor directly by gifts, not indirectly by earnings. And we learn, as we live among the poor, to feel that there are worse things

than ragged bodies and hungry mouths, that the moral degradation of a people in whom all self-respect and all self-help is lost, is a far worse evil than any amount of temporary suffering.

Supposing some one with magic hand could pass over the battle-fields of France, and, with a touch, heal the wound of every soldier, whether besieger or besieged—suppose at his golden touch trade were to revive, the wasted homesteads to become fertile again—nay, suppose he had the supreme power to call all the dead to life again—were such a being in existence, would he be most angel or most devil? Would any one venture to put up a prayer that such an one might appear? Surely not—surely we feel, as strongly as we can feel anything, that awful as is the suffering, it is a blessed thing in one way, because it makes war so terrible that civilized men will not lightly engage in it again. It was not so in times of old, when life was so cheap, because men knew not its value, and men thought they might as well die in war as in prison; it was not so in old times when men were so uncivilized that they became a prey to the disease which seemed by an iron fate to cut them off, and they thought they might as well die wrestling with a foe whom they had some power to vanquish; it is so now, and will be more and more increasingly so, as we learn how much

of our fate God has put in our own hands. And that is the lesson which the foolishly-charitable prevent people from learning. To go about with both hands in your pockets relieving distress right and left, is to shut men out from the possibility of learning the lesson of providence which God meant to teach them—is to prepare men for such a visitation as Ireland experienced, when demoralized by leaning on a staff of life, which they procured without exertion, that staff broke under them, and they had to learn in expatriation the secret of success. You who know what a wicked thing it is to spoil children, you who know how much suffering you prepare for the child who is the subject of your foolish kindness, you who know what evil you are preparing for the world in letting such an one go forth, with his unbridled impulses—remember, it is worse to spoil a man than to spoil a child, it is a greater crime to ruin a nation than to ruin an individual. I speak these things to you from my very heart. I have seen the poor demoralized by charity, I have seen those who were made for better things sink by degrees, through unwise charity, into the pauper class. I have known the devilish temptation of help too readily proffered, I have known the evils of too free a use of opiates, and anodynes, and stimulants, and I beseech you to beware how you perpetuate the condition of pauperism in the mass, by your over zeal in ministering to the wants of the individuals.

There is surely some meaning in the statement so often repeated that CHRIST healed with a touch, it is the touch of sympathy which is the great regenerator—sympathy which will make charity not a mere palliative, but an educational power—which will make relief not simply stop suffering, but raise the character and prevent the recurrence of the evil. Charity must cost you something. There is room enough for personal effort. It must cost you personal effort—you must go yourself among the poor and not distribute your charity by any society whatsoever. And as to the way in which you are to work—if instead of trying to reach the whole misery of a parish, or rather that part of it which (generally the worst part) obtrudes itself on your notice, you were to determine to take only ten families (*i.e.* 50 people), not chosen here and there, but ten families in three adjoining houses, if you were steadfastly to determine to relieve no one else, if you were to refuse all other charity, you would, believe me, do more good than by subscribing to a hundred societies. First, you would find some one family among the ten whom you could trust, from whom, without undue gossiping, you would learn the state of the rest in their view; armed thus you would be able to verify or correct by personal visits their estimate, and you would learn what are the real trials of the poor; you would make mistakes, you would be deceived, some would run away leaving

you in debt, but you would meet each new case with the experience gained in former work, and, eventually, you would do much; if you were richer, if you could afford to take a house, to be the landlord* to the poor of only one house, if you were to spend your money rather in improvements than in charity, and give your relief in work needed for that house, you would gain an insight into the wants and difficulties of the poor. And if, with the insight you had thus gained, you were to serve on charity committees, and aim at the high privilege of being a guardian of the poor, you would become a national benefactor, and do more to stop the flood of pauperism which threatens to overwhelm the land, than all those who by their charity provide boats to prevent men from being drowned by it. And if ten men and women did this, and others caught, as they will catch, the infection, in a short time our land might be a different land, a land in which religion would be possible, because the condition of the poorer classes would be such as to enable them to avail themselves of it. For CHRIST has taught us that the best seed will fail in bad ground. But to do all this, you must needs learn that the merciful

* I recommend earnestly those who wish to see what may be done for the poor, to read Miss Octavia Hill's "Cottage Property in London," *Fortnightly*, November, 1866, or her "Organized Work among the Poor," *Macmillan*, July, 1869.

qualities need repression, just as much as the passionate emotions. You may kill a man with kindness as well as with cudgels, you may sap a fortress by undermining it, as well as destroy the fortress by breaching it. And you will have to learn to say no. It will be very hard, especially at first, to refuse help, to be severe enough to demand rent; it will be as hard as to whip a child, to reprove a friend; but you must do it, and as you do it, you will learn to despise the weak mercy which fancies God is harsh and cruel; you will enter into His plans, and work with Him to higher ends than the mere palliation of suffering. I am not afraid of your being too hard. You will not be sorry to find exceptions to your rule—for God knows it is terrible work. It is work that will make you lie uneasily in your warm winter bed, but it is work which will also teach you to deny yourself luxuries when you feel how others suffer. The one great mistake that you will correct is the idea that it is better to correct evils at once, rather than to leave them to work out their gradual cure in the course of God's providence. The change which has come over medicine will infect you. You will not attack symptoms, you will try to regenerate the whole constitution. And nothing will aid you in this so much as the study of His life, who, in this, as in other things, is our Model and our Pattern. The Pool of Bethesda is a microcosm of His life. He was in the midst of suffer-

ing, moral and physical, He did not attempt to relieve all. He had greater faith in God than to meddle with His work. And as you reflect on His life, you will marvel not so much at how much He did as at how little He did. Think you that those gracious lips could not have preached a crusade against evil and vice which would have drawn thousands to His banners—think you that at His word a thousand swords, angelic and human, would not have flashed from their scabbards to destroy evil?—but how then would the scriptures have been fulfilled. He had a baptism to be baptized with, was straitened till it was accomplished, but He would not hurry it on. Slowly and gradually the physical world took its shape—others looking at the great Architect might wonder why He lingered so long over the foundations, why so much care was spent on the uncarved stones that formed the ground floor; hasty observers might wonder why He so long delayed to bring forth anything that seemed worthy of His skill—but He entered into the design of the great Architect, and having been in His secrets as regards the physical world, He believed equally in His work in the moral world, believed that out of the chaos of conflicting passions, and the shapeless agglomeration of human weaknesses, He would bring out, by His creative power—Right and Good.

Pauperism and the Poor-law.

October 2nd, 1870.

II. THESSALONIANS, iii. 10.

“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”

It became necessary for Paul, on account of the disturbance which the belief in the near approach of the coming of CHRIST had created in the minds of the Thessalonians, to promulgate anew a law which he had before laid down. It would appear that the unworthy among the disciples had argued that if the end of the world were so near, it mattered not whether they worked or no, and they had probably thrown themselves at once on the charitable fund which the new Christian community had established. The certainty of the future had made them careless of the present, and St. Paul had to declare authoritatively, that such were not entitled to the bread for which they had not laboured. Even earlier it would

seem that the mere existence of a fund had led to an improper use of it. Such danger seems to lie in the removal of that great stimulus to exertion, uncertainty. Such difficulty has always ensued when an attempt has been made to render poor-law relief co-extensive with the domain of private charity; and in talking to you this evening on the poor-law, in its connection with pauperism, we shall have to bear this fact in mind.

I have no intention of going into any exhaustive description of the poor-law, its history, its objects or its defects; some few remarks, however, must be made on these heads. First, as to its history. If you were to go back into the early times of English history, you would find no poor-laws; if men had not much liberty in those days, they were at least not free to starve. As liberty increased, and men became less dependent on their superiors, those who were of idle habits, or who were reduced through misfortune, found their needs supplied by the charity of those from whom they begged. By degrees the number of wanderers and beggars became very great, and our statute books have laws of extreme severity to prevent the practice. At length, in the reign of Elizabeth, a first attempt was made to create a poor-law; other laws had prevented the poor man from supplying himself in a certain way, this law was the first which provided a supply for him; and the

principle of the law was the principle of our text. The men were to be set to work, and to enable the overseers to find work, poor-rates were to be levied. If, however, the poor were impotent, old, blind, or unable to work, the rates might be used in their support. Later on, in the reign of George I, work-houses were, by law, established, and the labour-test was changed for the workhouse-test. By degrees the provisions of this law were relaxed, relief was given without the workhouse-test; the provision 'that if any man would not work, neither should he eat,' was construed, that if a man wanted to eat, the guardians were bound to provide him with work; the most absurd labour-tasks were given, because it was found necessary to provide some sort of work in exchange for the money paid to paupers, money was regularly given in aid of wages, and the uncertainty being removed, the mass of the people fell into so demoralized a condition, that it was hard to get honest work at all, that the dishonest paupers, having so much given them, wanted more, that property was unsafe, incendiarism and riot common, and, in 1831, things had come to such a pass that a Commission was appointed, as a result of which, the poor-law under which we now live was in 1834 passed. The main principle of the new poor-law was the reestablishment of the workhouse-test, and the abolition of provision of labour for all who demanded it. All who

were to be relieved under the new poor-law, were to be relieved, except in case of sickness, in the workhouse, and the union authorities were to be the hardest, not the easiest masters, bare subsistence being the wage they offered.

With some modifications, this is the poor-law now in existence. The object of that poor-law is to relieve only those who are absolutely destitute ; the theory of the poor-law is that no one is to be relieved out of the workhouse—the practice is somewhat different. Now, if I had time, of this were the place, I could easily shew you that this law was made purposely harsh, because the temptations to which an easier law exposed the independent labourer were so great, that few could resist them, and that the whole nation had gradually become pauperized. I wish, then, to fix your attention first on this fact ; there is no one thing so much misunderstood as the harshness of our present system—that harshness is inevitable. We must never fall into that old fallacy, that because a man must not be relieved unless he work, therefore every man who wants relief must be supplied with work. Destitution, absolute inability to find work tested by a readiness to avail himself of the hard work and hard fare of the workhouse, must be the sole condition of relief, and any attempt to relax the hard rules under which it is given will be sure to recall the evils of the old poor-

law system. You will easily see this when you remember how very nearly the condition of the labourer outside the house is to that of him within. In our Metropolitan District, at least, there is a very large proportion of men, women, and children, who fare no better out of the house than they do inside it, and the necessary restraint, the absence of freedom, of drink and tobacco, form the only difference between life within and without. And, therefore, in order to prevent the whole class of poor from throwing up the struggle of life, and losing their independence, it is necessary to make the test as harsh as possible. If men have been reduced to poverty by extravagance or improvidence, then the hard teaching of suffering will lose its effect if we provide too easy a remedy. Nature knows no such mercy—if a man break one of her laws, neglect the law of gravity, or overlook the law of contagion, he will suffer without appeal.* Nay, I am inclined to think, that if we wish to be merciful to those who really deserve mercy, we must be even more severe towards those who are unworthy of it. The number of those who claim relief in our Metropolitan Districts, and in our large towns, increases so

* "Hunger and cold are the punishments by which nature represses improvidence and sloth; if we remove these punishments, we must substitute other means of repression."—*Nassau Senior*.

fast, that it seems impossible to find funds to meet each case adequately. And therefore a system has sprung up of giving to each just so much as will prevent him from starving, and so little as will prevent him from coming to the Board again, instead of giving him enough really to live in health upon. I wish it could be seen that it is to the interest of the honest labourer that the poor-law should be made harsh, both because its harshness diminishes the number of those thrown upon it, and because the diminution in the numbers will allow of more relief being given in each case.

It is also necessarily harsh in refusing relief to a man if he is able to earn anything. Without a knowledge of the history of our land before 1834, without a disquisition on political economy, which it is impossible to give you, it may be hard to make you see that relief given to supplement wages, the very thing all poor people would like to have, is the very worst thing for them. The reason is, that if men are receiving anything besides their wages, they can afford to work for less wages, and by degrees the rate of wages falls. I am inclined to think that the wretched wages given for needle-work is an example of this, that they are so small, not only because of the introduction of machines, but also on account of the relief given to widows. However, you may take it as an indisputable

fact, that money given in aid of wages, relieves the employer and not the employed, reduces wages and not misery. The necessities of the workman are the gauge of earnings; and if a man cannot afford to pay his workmen enough for them to live on, it is best that trade should be stopped, and not that it should be bolstered up by public charity. The object, then, of the poor-law is to relieve only those who are in absolute destitution, and to effect this, it is necessary to use harshness.

And now to dilate on some of its defects. The first great defect arises out of this harshness. The poor-law cannot discriminate, it treats all who come before it alike, the honest poor man, whom real misfortune has thrown into trouble, who comes for the first time on charity and feels bitterly humiliated, and the bold-faced ne'er-do-weel, who claims his right to be fed, because he says he has no work to do. Now, whilst private charity is what it is, unorganised and ill-regulated, the poor-law must deal with both of these classes; we hope for a time when private charity will be so ordered, and so managed, that to the poor-law may be committed the treatment of the latter class, whilst to the former, charity may be extended under another system. But how would you divide the classes? In all law, that is, when law becomes remedial, and is not simply penal as in its earliest condition, it seems

to be recognized as a principle, that a first offence is to be considered of less gravity than one which has been often repeated. To private benevolence one would relegate all those who for the first time applied for charity; but after a second, or at latest a third application, they should be referred to the severer tribunal. And whilst the poor-law stands as it does at present, this same distinction might be made. English law presumes every man to be innocent till he is found guilty; and if no previous application is proved against a man, he ought to be considered a 'new case.' Such poor persons should be spared the humiliation of mixing with the common paupers, should come up on a separate day or at a different time, should be addressed in a different tone, and should have their ultimate fate clearly pointed out. There is great difficulty in doing this in our large Metropolitan Districts, but a committee might be formed to carry it out. But when a man had for the second or third time applied then there is *prima facie* evidence that he is infected with the contagion of pauperism, and however hard the law might press on certain individuals, he must go into quarantine, if not into prison.* For I would make the law as regards chronic paupers even more severe. "The law of Elizabeth was," says Nassau Senior, "not a law of charity or economy, but of police." I would

* Lord Kimberley's Act of this session is directed to this end.

revert to that principle; the workhouse test does in fact endorse it, but it fails in its purpose, in that it allows a man to enter and discharge himself as often as he likes, if he can only prove himself to be destitute; and I would give the guardians power, subject to an appeal to a magistrate, to refuse to allow a man to leave the house under certain conditions. The class of sturdy idlers with whom we have to deal, who rob the poor of the relief which ought to be their due, who harden the hearts of the guardians who have to deal with them, who break men's faith in human nature, these must be dealt with in a stern way. Even these we must try and educate to better things, we must not punish them only because they have been bad. Yet, all poverty is more or less an offence, arising out of improvidence if not out of extravagance. (I am excluding the comparatively few cases of misfortune, where provision has been made for the future, and that provision has failed.) It can only be cured by teaching men the better way of providence and thrift. If men are not cured by the first, second, or third touch of suffering, then we must try and separate them from others whom they would contaminate, and train them to more prudent habits. We must teach them that if men will not work neither shall they eat. And if our workhouses are not big enough to hold them, then in some purer atmosphere, where physical health will be increased, and come to the aid of moral reformation,

the cure should be effected. There are thousands of acres, not of waste land (that might interfere with property) but of unreclaimed land on our coasts and in our estuaries, which might be made to add to the wealth of the country; and here there would be no fear of the pauper injuring the ordinary labourer.*

There is another crying evil which must be remedied. Relief is still given in aid of wages. No one can pretend that what is given, either in the ordinary weekly relief or in "necessaries" will really support a family. If you increase relief, you ruin the parish, and give a premium to paupers. The present plan is only justifiable on the understanding, which is a positive fact, that by odd jobs done by the woman when the man is sick, by the man when the woman is sick, by each when relief is given to one or other in the workyard, the relief of the workhouse will be supplemented. This must be altered—when one is sick the other must come into the workroom, when both are destitute, both must come into the workroom, you must never relieve the one without the other; observe, I say into the workroom, not into the workhouse; you may let them sleep out if the case is not

* I am not at all afraid of introducing remunerative employment into workhouses, though I thus speak, believing, as I do, that what goes in relief of rates will swell the capital available for wages.

hopeless, but you must be sure that all their work is given to you, and in return you must relieve them amply and fully, keep their children to school, and, perhaps, feed them. You need not fear thus to increase your poor too much. The test will be a very hard one.

And lastly, you must alter the system of relief for widows. It is most unwise and demoralizing, that a man should know that, however improvident he is, the parish will take care of his widow. It is most unjust that widows should in all cases receive relief because they are widows—in many cases being set free from a husband they are better off than they were before. This relief to widows ought to be so managed, that you should not have a perpetual number of pensioners with an increased allowance for each child. A law should be enacted like that St. Paul elsewhere laid down, that they must be “widows indeed,” if they are to be permanently relieved, and in other cases, such proportionate help* should be given as their circumstances at the time of their husband’s death make necessary—but you must be sure that it is necessary, and that when given it will tend to set them above relief, not to make them dependent on it.

* Every Union should have a “widows” Committee, as well as a “new case” Committee.

I have tried to make you understand three things—1. The reason of the harshness of the poor-law—2. The need of further harshness, in order that all may obtain the relief they want—3. The desire I have to see the poor-law less penal, and more educational. Let me say one or two words more on each of these heads.

1. For harshness. The poor-law is no harsher than Paul's law. There was, many years ago, a brave general named Hannibal, who, with a large army, overran Italy, very much as the Prussians are now overrunning France; in those days they did not fight in the winter, but went into winter quarters till the spring came round. Hannibal took his soldiers into some very pleasant quarters at a place called Capua; the place was so pleasant that the soldiers got quite unfit for work, and when they went out to fight again they were beaten, and were eventually driven out of the country. The poor of this country have a great battle to fight; they have to fight it against enemies without, and against still worse enemies within. Sometimes in the fight the stress is so great that they are obliged to take refuge in the workhouse, to find assistance from poor-law relief. They have a right to it if they are destitute, the law of the land provides it for them, but it provides it on harsh terms, very harsh terms, separation of husband and wife, of children from their parents, if they go into the house, and on disagreeable terms if they receive it out of doors.

If the house were made more comfortable, if relief were easier to obtain, these would become to them what Capua did to Hannibal's soldiers; they would unfit them to do battle for the future. This has been already the case to some extent, and our vagrant wards, which, owing to public outcry, were made needlessly luxurious, supply a good instance. To prevent this, to hinder improper persons from receiving relief, it is necessary—2. To make relief even more difficult to obtain, to provide that all who are relieved shall have no other source of income than that provided by the house. This is to be done in the interest of the poor. If the present system continues, no one can tell how much is earned out of the house, and the man who tells the best tale is likely to get the most relief. As the harshness of the poor-law comes to the relief of the individual, by forbidding him to yield to the weak instinct of giving up the fight, so it also comes to his assistance by shutting out improper characters, and thus putting more money at the disposal of the guardians for help to proper cases. I know as a fact, from many employers, that there are men who will refuse a hard day's work, to take their chance of a short day's work at the docks, knowing that they can fall back on the workhouse; I know as a fact that many prefer the 2s. 6d. of the docks, because it is paid daily, to the larger wage which is reserved to the end of the week; and I know as a fact that the vagrant ward,

and the 'house' are the hotel of many people who spend their pence at the theatre, and come in at 11 and 12 for a bed. It is in the interest of the honest poor that I wish these driven by stress and by refusal of relief to hard work, and their rejection would alter the tone of workhouse officials, who have to deal with so many evil men that at last they get to believe that none are good. 3. I want to see the poor-law used more as an educational engine. We have learnt this in our prisons, we ought to learn it elsewhere. We ought to make of the poor-law relief a lever to raise the pauper, not a chain to keep him down. There is only one class entitled to permanent relief, and that is the old and infirm. It is necessary even here to be harsh, lest people should be driven to think they need not look out for the future, lest hard-hearted friends should cast those whom they ought to relieve on public bounty. But for these only can the law permanently provide. And the evil of the poor-law as at present administered is, that it recognises this in seeking to get rid of each case as fast as it can, that it does not recognise it in seeking to get rid of the evil which makes the man a pauper. Too often the very treatment of the house sends the man back ten times worse than he went in, lost to self-respect, lost to hope. These things ought not so to be, they will not be so when men recognise the fact, that they are to punish as God punishes, not to give pain, but to procure amend-

ment. If a man will not work neither shall he eat—that is God's law, not Paul's law ; it is a law running through all the conditions of existence and of society. No work, no rest ; no labour, no comfort ; no exertion, no enjoyment ; sleeplessness, restlessness, ennui, these are the remedies by which God brings us to a better mind. Let us emulate His work and His patience, and above all, let us not look at the Heaven beyond as a kind of pauper refuge, where we, wearied of failure here, may lay our heads to rest and be idle ; let us think of it as the inheritance of those who have suffered, and laboured, and toiled, like their Master, and who have learnt, like Him, to find recreation in work.

**Pauperism,
as met by self-culture and education.**

October 9th, 1870.

ROMANS, ii. 14.

“These having not the law, are a law unto themselves.”

ST. PAUL is here speaking of the height to which men can rise by means of the natural conscience, and without distinct Divine revelation. They are bold words, wonderfully bold if we consider what were the then views of the dealings of God with the chosen people, wonderfully bold if we compare them with the timid recognition of the truth since then, which has consigned the heathen to what I believe are called the “uncovenanted mercies of God.” Such a text emboldens me to speak to you of what self-culture and education, as apart from Christianity, may do to raise men out of the pauperism into which they have fallen, and to prevent men from allowing

others to sink into it. I use the word education as explanatory of self-culture, not as anything beyond or apart from it. Education, *i.e.* the calling out of the faculties of men, does not consist in learning, but all men must pass through the gateway of learning into the palace and treasure-house of education.

Pauperism, so far as it is caused by the fault of the poor, we have seen to be due to improvidence and ignorance—pauperism, so far as it is occasioned by the rich, we have seen to be due to apathy and extravagance. What can education do to remedy this? Education cannot do all, but it can do much. I speak to a congregation who, by God's mercy and by virtue of being church-goers, are, as a rule, removed from the temptations to the grosser habits which lead eventually to pauperism. Now, what is it which puts us above the temptation to waste and drink: surely it is having a taste for something higher and better. We do not want to go and sit in the public-house, and we should not abstain from it because we thought it a sin to go there, but simply because we have found, or fancy we have found, something better. Education has widened our mind, it has taught us to think and to read, as well as to eat and to gossip. So long as we had only these lower tastes, something like the public-house could have been our only means of amusement; now, we shrink from it, and turn

from it to newspapers and books. I do not say that education will do away with drunkenness, or that love of excitement which creates so much waste in the immediate spending of earnings, large or small. Drunkenness, gluttony, and pleasure-love exist in the highest as in the lowest; but, I say, that the cultivation of the mind does supply a means of escape from debasing tastes, and that, without such means, there is great fear lest men should ever remain contented with the pleasures of sense. When will men believe that education will do more good than harm? When shall we cease to hear from those who ought to know better, that education without religion only makes men clever devils?—devils in the sense the word is used they were before—it is only a question whether brutal devils, or clever devils, are the worst; to my mind there cannot be a question that the brutality which men share with the beasts that perish presents less opportunity for ultimate recovery than the cleverness, however devilish. I do not think that, in the long run, society is the loser. A Napoleon, whatever his vices, is a less evil than a Nero.

But, if education stopped here, it would do but little. A man does not stop with the taste for reading; as he reads, his thoughts widen, and he has a desire for respectability and comfort which opens out to him new tastes. And first amongst these tastes

comes a desire for the home arrangements and habits, which promote health. So long as a man has his bodily labour only to look to, he finds that work can be done when he is not quite the thing. Ill health only makes work a little more uphill; but when by education he has fitted himself for head-work, whether to fill up his leisure hours or to form his occupation, then he finds that the brain will not work unless the body be in health, and there is no greater incentive than the desire to think, to keep the body in temperance, soberness and chastity. Ignorant at first of sanitary matters, he soon finds out, moreover, that a heavy head and an ill-aired room have a very close connection, and his reading soon supplies the rest. With widened tastes comes the desire for more means, and the determination to pinch and to save to procure the power of gratifying the higher tastes. When a man has got so far, his education has made great strides, and a man's introduction to the Savings Bank is often his sentence of liberation from all grosser tastes. How I wish Savings Banks, and especially the Post-office Savings Banks, were more used by the poor, and how earnestly do I long to see the Government supply some National Benefit Society, which may do for all classes of workmen what the Odd-fellows and Foresters sometimes do for certain of the artisans! And when a man has attained to this height, he naturally looks back to the evils which

beset those in the plain below him, as well as on to the new prospects which are opened out to him. In looking back he sees that, besides the great temptations he has himself escaped, there are two evils against which he must warn his children—neglect of education and early marriage. For the first, he is anxious that his children should have the same weapon with which he cut his way through the surrounding foes, and if the child wearies sometimes of his drill, he encourages him in the exercise. For the second, he sees that half the misery which exists arises from a man having early weighted himself with a burden which prevents him from rising, both by increasing his expenses, and by rendering it impossible for him to choose the best market in which to dispose of his labour. For I assume that the first result of education will be to teach him that which the agricultural labourer is slowly learning, that there are other places where wages are higher. I assume, moreover, that, failing better work in England, reading may beget in him a desire to change his quarters to a more fertile land. And he determines that he will teach his children to try and be self-confident, and to learn at least not to marry till they have some prospect of finding the marriage fees a not undue burden, of being able to bring up their children without the midwife's letter and the Dorcas box, without the prospect of being obliged to practise their first economy in

straitened times, in the saving of school-pence.*

And so far education profits the man himself through his own selfish interests, † and let us not despise this kind of education, though it be the lowest form. There is a higher principle which now comes in. The moment a man becomes possessed of property, he rises to the idea of society. He is no longer a unit, he is a member of a family—he is no longer the head of a family, he is a member of a nation. As a head of his family, as a member of the nation, new duties and new responsibilities rest on him. His children are no longer so many bread-earners, on whom he is to live, they are members of a family which is a constituent part of the nation. His aims are not circumscribed

* There have been during the last six years, 322 banns of marriage published in St. Mark's, Whitechapel—of the 644 persons concerned, 155 were under 21 years of age, or only just of that age, *i.e.* 24 per cent. or nearly one quarter, married when of tender age. 84 persons, *i.e.* 42 couples, or 13 per cent. were both under age, and 71 persons, or 11 per cent. being under age, married persons of full age. To the moralist there may seem to be greater evils than early marriage, but early marriages create such an evil as makes it our bounden duty to protest against them. These things ought ye not to have done, and still to have left the other undone.

† It is quite unnecessary to point out how this tends to cure the evils of hand-to-mouth spending and of general extravagance.

by the walls of his house and the necessities of the week, he begins to see that there is a life outside the life of the individual—the life of the nation. Politics begin to interest him, not as once on a time it seemed to him, because an election brings so much money and opens so many public-houses, but because the interests of his family, and of his trade, and of his country, depend on the man returned to parliament. What does the daily labourer care for taxes! He does not pay them, he only hears that rents are higher because taxes are heavier, and he thinks it a dodge of the landlord to get more rent. But a householder, or a man who is entering on that unpleasant state when income-tax first becomes due, feels an interest in the taxation of the country; and he determines to claim his place in the councils of the parish, to raise his voice in the affairs of the country. And when men have gone so far as to learn what patriotism means, they have not much left to learn.

That self-education so seldom ends here, is, I believe, due to the fault of the rich—they, too, need self-culture. Book learning to a certain extent they have, æstheticism has been cultivated in them; they are above the grosser tastes, and their very vices have a kind of refinement; but patriotism they have not learnt, and because they think of their class and not of their country, therefore they do much to hinder others

from rising. The idea that all the positions which are paid for by the taxation of the country are the heritage of the rich, who may fling a few crumbs away to feed the poor whom they need as assistants—the notion that the Universities are places where gentlemen are to learn manners and independence, not where all who can are to eat of the tree of knowledge, is not yet exploded. And because we have no eyes to see how the prosperity of the country depends just as much on the well-being of the poor, as on the property of the rich, therefore we are unsympathetic to the poor, we grudge every concession to them lest they should encroach on what long possession enables us to call our rights—we are awfully severe on their faults, and terribly blind to their virtues.

I take but one instance out of many—the attitude of us, the rich, towards trade unions. Supposing an intelligent foreigner, ignorant of our traditions, were to come to England, and to learn that among large classes of workmen a society existed, which was a benefit society in sickness, a provident society in cases of dearth of employment; supposing he found that workmen for the good of their fellows determined to yield the advantages they might obtain by piece-work, and in order to do good to the trade generally, to sacrifice individual skill and individual earnings; supposing he found that often these societies had

commanded their members for the good of the profession to give up work; supposing he learnt that they had been implicitly obeyed, and that in a few days the houses which had been furnished with all the labourers' little luxuries of furniture and food had become bare of all but the necessities of life; and supposing him to learn that all this privation was borne cheerfully for the good of the trade—would he not say? "These men are grand fellows; now I understand why Englishmen are never beaten in battle; if they can fight their peaceful battles so grandly, no wonder they are so splendid in war." But, give all this the name of a trade union, and tell all this to an Englishman, and he will tell you, "trade unions, sir, are the curse of the country." And then he will go into a long story as to the way in which they interfere with trade, and as to the outrages committed by their members, and as to the dishonesty of men not working their hardest when they are at work, and so on. Yet, can anything but real criminal want of sympathy prevent us from honouring these trade unionists? If they have sometimes made mistakes and done damage to the cause which they had at heart, should we not at least pity rather than condemn them, and say of them, as we should say in any other case, that it did not matter being beaten in this or that skirmish, if only the great cause prevailed? that it mattered little if trade were driven from one place if

only workmen got on the whole better terms? Should we forget that in the name of a cause, holier than that of trade unionism, men had been mutilated, and persecuted, and put to death? And should we not see that there might be other places besides the workshop where men took as large a salary and did as little for it as they possibly could? Only that in the former case there is a definite, if a mistaken purpose in doing little, whilst in the other, idleness arises from want of purpose. I have tried to look at trade unions fairly, and I say honestly that I can see nothing but faults of judgment arising out of want of education in them. That horrible things have been done in the name of trade unions I do not deny, but that the cause is more responsible for them than Christianity is responsible for all the deeds of its strenuous supporters I deny, and I cannot but rejoice that there is springing up among the working men a bond which ties them closely together in interest, and makes them forget in the cause of their trade, personal considerations. Their cultivation will enable them to do away with the evils of the system; they will learn in the long run to submit their quarrels to arbitration, to hate violence and persecution, to feel that a man acts beneath his dignity when, even for the good of others, he does less than he is able to do. And if we only realized, as we ought to do, how the good of the nation depends on the good of each individual, if we

were only patriots in the true sense, we should long ago have learned to respect these men, and to be thankful that they had a spirit within which enabled them to rise above the pressure of capital, and to claim for themselves their rights and privileges. Greater education, whilst it will teach both masters and men that the interests of labour and capital are identical, will teach both that the law which regulates work and wages, does not work itself out without effort and interference on the part of man. Capitalists and the upper class generally are apt to forget this, and to quote the statement that the interests of capital and labour are identical, as if it implied that working men had only to let things alone and all would come right; but neither this nor any other law of nature or society can be developed to its full result of usefulness, without the interference and co-operation of man. Yes, when we rise to the true value of the statement that all interests are identical, that a polished and cultivated aristocracy and an illiterate and boorish populace cannot exist in the same nation, without bringing it to ruin, then we shall stir ourselves up to bridge over the gulf between the condition of the rich and the poor, to make life a little more tolerable to the latter, if a little less luxurious to the former!

But self-culture and education can carry a man

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even higher than this; if they teach a man to subordinate his own pleasure to the good of his country and of society in public matters, they can also influence his private life; so that he shall not live for himself but for the good of others. If they teach him patriotism, they teach him also morality. Christianity itself goes no higher than this in its results on society. And that morality, not of a mere passive sort but of the most active, and if I may say so, most aggressive kind, can be born of simple culture as apart from religion, history teaches us. There may be some doubt as to how far such men as Owen and Congreve and Stuart Mill, have their philosophy insensibly influenced by the very Christianity which they ignore, for they cannot divest themselves entirely of their surroundings, but such men as Confucius and Socrates and Marcus Aurelius, have lived to shew that without Christianity it is possible to attain to a most perfect, and most self-sacrificing morality. What a comfort to know that Paul claimed such as fellow-workers with him, as those who without the law were a law unto themselves, and showed the works of the law written in their hearts.

I have but very poorly sketched out what I intended to prove, that the widening of a man's powers by education does enable him to rise above grosser tastes, does teach him to live for others and not for himself,

does teach him that highest form of morality and self-sacrifice—the abstaining from all indulgence whereby any weak brother is offended, *i.e.* is made to stumble, is made weaker, or poorer. It is very curious, and Christianity ought not to be ashamed to own it, that she has often risen to the teaching of her Master by the influence of those without. If she has had her grand triumphs in the destruction of slavery, and in the elevation of woman, which belong to her exclusively, which probably never would have been arrived at without her, she must also confess that it was philosophy which taught her that toleration and not persecution was the principle of her founder, that it was left for the most unorthodox among Christian sects to preach with the most secular philosopher that crusade against war, which we now believe to have been a part of the mission of the Prince of Peace. Christianity will lose nothing by acknowledging, with St. Paul, that God has other ways of teaching men than by direct revelation.

And to me, at least, it seems that if CHRIST were to come on earth again, it might happen as of old that He would pass by the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the Scribes and the Chief Priests, that He would be found as of old among the Publicans and sinners; that He would pass by our churches, our charities, and our universities, all sealed with the

sacred impress of religion, and that possibly He would find not in them, but in some whom their supporters despise, the best examples of the life He would have men lead, the best evangelists of the truth He had to proclaim. An awful word that to the self-righteous Pharisees, "Verily I say unto you, the Publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you," awful, and yet if true for their time, true perhaps for ours also. I have shewn you, so far as I can, what self-culture can do—it can do much—it cannot do all—yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Panperism, as met by Christianity.

October 9th, 1870.

ROMANS viii. 2, 3.

“ For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God (did) sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, (He) condemned sin in the flesh.”

Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. The way of self-culture is good, the way of Christianity is better. Self-culture may eventually lead a man up to a very great elevation ; it will, however, be a long and a tedious process. Christianity supplies a motive which very much shortens that process, a motive which, made as men are, we can ill dispense with. Supposing a man to be left to self-culture only, there seems to be no particular reason why, in his earlier years, he should attempt self-culture. Law would represent itself to him as a creation of

man, and in his individual capacity he would think himself at liberty to set aside and alter any law, till he found the reason why society had laid down such a law. There is, therefore, a clear gain in moral progress in starting with the hypothesis of religion, that a power without has commanded us to do, and to abstain from, certain things. In the family of the world, as in the private family, those who are still *in statu pupillari*, or who have not attained to moral independence, need a power from without to guide and constrain. In this first stage we find St. Paul in the chapter preceding my text. He tells us in my text of his escape from that estate into the glorious liberty of the children of God. In the first state, Paul tells us that he found himself subject to a law, which, as it came from God, he felt he ought to obey, but against which he had an instinct of rebellion which he could not overcome. He describes, in language of wonderful force, the struggle that went on between his better self and his weaker self; he describes it in language which all men, from the feeblest, who has not quite given up the struggle, to the strongest, who with all his energies still resists undaunted, can appreciate and use. He tells us how keenly he was able to discern that the law was good, that in its harsh precepts it was not against him, but for him, that it was meant to be the ally of his weaker self against his lower self, that nevertheless the lower

self was the stronger. The law had exercised an educating power; he had been able to recognize that it was good for him to have an external power compelling him, in some sort, to disobey the promptings of his lower nature, but he had not yet gained the victory, and the struggle was still hard.

Now, in this condition, in our moral childhood, the law finds us. When we pass out of actual childhood into man's estate, we naturally long for liberty, and we find a law coming to us with the sanction of God, which fetters our liberty. I think I am not wrong in saying that were it not that we believe the law came from God, we should, especially in our earlier days, resist it, neglect it, violate it. However desirable it be to make men rest their obedience on some higher motive than fear, how much soever unworthy it be of the teacher to try and keep men in the childish state by the constant presentation of fear as the impulse to right, it cannot be denied that that motive does play an important part in our education. Still we outlive fear, and there comes a time when a man says, "Don't talk to me of fear to keep me from sin; you don't know what sin is if you suppose that I am to be terrified with consequences;" then if he has not attained to the education which Paul had received, he breaks loose from all restraint, he says boldly, (and I am not surprised at him), "I will take the consequen-

ces;" and if he has no one to shew him a better way, the man's case is a terrible one. But if he has been educated by the law, if he has been trying to learn that if God lays down a law it must be for some good reason, then by degrees he has come to be able to say with Paul, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good;" and perhaps to go a step further and say, "I delight in the law of God after the inner man." Still, all the while he is under bondage he sees the use of the law, he acknowledges its excellence, he wishes he could keep it; but he finds another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, he chafes against the law, the very existence of which seems to stir up the evil in him. It seems to him that if the law were not there with its positive command he would keep it, but that its positiveness creates opposition. Observe, he thinks he is good only because the law tells him to be good. He has seen no other reason for goodness, God has commanded it, and so he will do it, but the practice of good is developing in him a habit of good, a conscience of good, and he is becoming prepared for that revelation which will set him free. What that revelation is Paul tells us in our text. It comes just at the moment when the struggle seems at its worst, just at that moment when he has in his hopelessness cried out—"Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death. I thank God,

through JESUS CHRIST our LORD, I struggle still, but still with my mind only I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." And then he breaks out into his triumphant song—"There is now therefore no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS; for the law of the spirit of life in CHRIST JESUS hath made me free from the law of sin and death;" and he explains how this had been done, that the life of CHRIST, in condemning sin in the flesh, had done the work for him; he has seen the LORD, and having seen Him and the glory of His life, he needs no other stimulus to right-doing. We all know how the reading of the biography of some great man stirs in us the desire to be like him. We all know that the lives, the statues, and the pictures of the Nelsons and the Wellingtons of our country have been the means of stirring up a martial spirit; and inasmuch as the life of CHRIST is infinitely above their life, insomuch does this example stir men up to an excess of enthusiasm in well doing. Yes, Paul had seen CHRIST, and life was a new thing to him; the commandment was no longer grievous. CHRIST had shewed in life and in death how much more noble it was to overcome sin than to be conquered by it; how the victory over sin was worth any sacrifice, even that of life itself, and Paul was strong to follow Him Who had died for him. And we have seen Him, too; we have seen a vision of the beauty of holiness, which makes us feel

that we can never rest in sin ; yes, we have seen Him—O God ! how dimly—and yet we have seen Him, and life can never be to us what it was before. We saw Him as He passed down the ranks before the battle began, and as we saw Him, we thought that with such a leader we could never be beaten. Alas ! the battle has not gone quite so well as in our enthusiasm we fancied it would, but the fault was ours ; and again and again, above the din of the battle, we have heard His voice bidding us overcome as He overcame—again and again, even in the midst of the struggle, we have caught His eye, and as it lighted on us, the evil thoughts vanished, and we were strong to do battle, and never, never, God helping, will we go back, never shall sin get the victory over us. Ah ! my friends, you know what I mean and you know how love of Him puts love of sin away, and you know how in this new state you still keep the law, but not from the same motive. Of old the law was there, and you kept it, but you wished the law away ! now if it were not there, if it had been blotted out, you would still keep it. Do I speak to any who does not understand this, then I will make you understand it. You know that when you were a child you found it easy to tell a lie, and you were only kept from doing it, either by fear of punishment or because you were told it was wrong. Now you are a man, all that has passed away, you would not lie now, not because you are

afraid of the consequences, but because you love truth. No one could make you tell a lie by a bribe of thousands of pounds. Well, what you feel towards lying, you shall one day, if you will only come to CHRIST, feel as regards all sin. If you were to be betrayed into a lie now, what would you feel? miserable, ashamed, you would hate yourself, and you might be betrayed into it, but you know you would never continue in it. Such in some sense we feel who can say, the law of the spirit of life in CHRIST JESUS hath made me free from the law of sin and death. We can now say in some sense, he that is born of God doth not commit sin. Alas! that sin does still cling to us—alas, that day by day we still have to confess ourselves miserable sinners! and yet we feel that by God's grace we shall one day get the victory over it. His Spirit has led us to CHRIST, and having seen Him, we can never be what we were once. We may fall like Peter, we can never be utterly cast down.

But, if religion ended here, it would only have done half its work. The evil of the religious teaching of the present day is, that it makes salvation consist in the rescue of one's own soul. Probably, selfish as we are, we should never rise to the height of what CHRIST has done for us, if it had not a personal bearing on our own souls. But CHRIST came not to save you and me only, *i.e.* not only to make us righteous and to take

us to heaven. Salvation, in the Christian sense of the word, is the bringing of us into personal relation with the Father, and with his children in the world; and therefore Paul goes on, without a break, to dwell on the glories of sonship. From the fourteenth verse onward, he describes how this sonship affects us in our walk and in our hopes. The world is a different place to us, when we realize that CHRIST lived for us as well as died for us; life is a different thing to us since we have seen the life of CHRIST. Of old, pomp, and power, and greatness, and glory, these were the things we courted and cared for. But that thirty years of obscurity, the word of God shut up in His bones, the high purposes set aside because it was His Father's will, that wondrous self-sacrifice in His active life, and above all, that marvellous self renunciation in His early death which He makes us understand was a voluntary act: all this gives us a new view of what life should be. And what enabled Him to lead this life? "He was about His Father's business." What enabled Him to die this death? "Father, not my will, but thine, be done." If we could attain to that, if we had the same stimulus, then we could follow in His steps; and to give us that hope was precisely His work. He came to reveal that God was our Father, ever in His parables and in His discourses, that is the name under which He presents God to us, and we, as we draw near to God through Him, receive

the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry "Abba, Father." And when we have breathed that word Father, life, and duty, and death, have a new meaning. Life is a new thing to us, not a place to be hurried through so that we may get to a better place on beyond, but a school, which has its holidays in prospect—but a school, whose lessons we must not miss; for if we hurry on to the holidays we shall not truly enjoy them, and we shall miss all the training which would fit us for the after life. Life is indeed a new thing, every new trouble is a new rule in arithmetic, a new study which may indeed, weak as we are, cost us bitter tears, but which cannot be useless, which must bring profit. Every new joy is a precious thing, we are not afraid of indulging in it; if our Father gave us the toy, then the best recompense we can make to Him is to enjoy it; we are not afraid that His face will cloud because we are not thinking of Him at every moment whilst we play with it, only if in our play His voice is heard, we see His face, we do not hesitate to cast away our plaything, for His presence is better than all. And duty is a new thing, it no longer presents itself to us as a ceaseless struggle after a standard to which we can never attain. We no longer believe that we have to work up to a certain modicum, or excess of holiness, which our judge may reject as insufficient after all; CHRIST, who is our righteousness, has done all for us. He has taught us that we are not

working against God, but with God. He has taught us that if we will only submit ourselves to the educating power of God, He who has begun a good work in us will accomplish it even to the end. And death is too a new thing—what, we know not—only we know this, that the old idea of getting to heaven, *i.e.* a place of happiness, could not please us now; death, whatever it does for us, must be this, an admission into His presence; therefore we strive so to use life that we may miss no lesson here which may fit us for nearness to Him. It would be intolerable that we should have to speak through an interpreter with the King of kings, therefore we strive to learn the language of heaven. And we believe we shall see Him, and knowing what the glimpse of His presence does here for us, in transforming us, in carrying us out of ourselves, we believe that then we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is, not in a glass darkly, but face to face. And the relationship with Him makes us cultivate our relationship with our fellow men. CHRIST died for them and for us, CHRIST lived for them and for us. They are our brethren. Oh! for a little more unselfishness in religion. Our prayer is “my Father,” the Lord’s prayer is “our Father.” The spirit of our religion is good; baptism admits us into the family—the communion is the family meal—our burial service treats us as brethren, but our practice is faulty—our own individual

souls seem so precious, that we turn every public prayer from the plural to the singular, and join in it heartily or not, just as it seems to bear on the circumstances of our life. Therefore, the sentiment which instituted a daily form of prayer for the whole church has died out. Private and family prayer are considered not adjuncts of, but substitutes for common prayer, and the church loses in consequence. Therefore, there is this separation between rich and poor. Therefore, there is this vicarious charity of subscription lists and societies, and this waste in the distribution of funds, this want of personal contact, which makes charity degrade instead of elevating.

I am anticipating a little, but I do but anticipate your thoughts. What has all this to do with Christianity as a cure for pauperism? Much every way. Pauperism could not exist if Christianity prevailed. What is it that reduces men to pauperism? Evil habits in the main. What is it that prevents poverty from working its cure? The helplessness which comes with pauperism. What is the cure for evil habits? We have seen it—the recognition of CHRIST, the belief in what He has done for us. He who has seen CHRIST will never be a pauper. He may be a poor man, like Him who had not where to lay His head. He will never be a cringing suppliant, a dishonest pensioner on another's bounty—he will never

try to forget his misery in drink or pleasure. What is the cure of hopelessness? The belief that God has not deserted him—the knowledge that he is still a member of the great family, a son of God. He that hath this hope in himself, purifieth himself even as He is pure. Yes, if men could only see CHRIST, if they could only believe in God, if they knew Him as their Father, pauperism would be impossible. Oh! if poor men would but read their bibles, how different would be their lot! For, indeed, it must often have occurred to the rich, that the poor seem to be nearer of kin, and to have more part in the Son of Man than they have. They can only fancy what CHRIST would have done had He been rich, had He been exposed to the temptations of wealth and luxury; but the poor know what He did, when he was exposed to the temptations of hunger and want. Oh! that sublime life of waiting on His Father's pleasure and doing His Father's will. How grand is it beside the story of the conquerors of this world! How noble has He made life by His precept, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." How grandly has He shewn by example that it is nobler to give than to get. The world can never be the same as it was before JESUS of Nazareth came—let us try and do our part to make it what He would have it to be. What is it that makes the conditions of society such that pauperism can exist? It is simply and solely the neglect of the

truth which He came to teach and to preach, the truth of the brotherhood of man. The Jews hardly needed it so far as their nation was concerned. The fiery trials through which they had gone so welded them together as a people, that as a rule then as now they practised great charity towards the poor. But the heathens were to them much what our paupers are to us, an alien nation. I much fear to speak too strongly on this head.* It seems hard in an age of charity, such as the present, to bring an accusation like this against the rich. But none the less do I believe it be one fairly to be alleged. Our charity is in a great measure vicarious, and our judgment of the poor is quite different to our judgment of those in our own class. It angers me often to hear the poor spoken of, especially by employers of labour, as if they were a different people to the rich—it angers me much to see so little allowance made for their vices and their follies—I am angry with myself, for I find myself falling into the same way of talking. Perhaps, some day a prophet of the poor men will arise and preach a mission to the rich, enter their drawing

* “I thought,” said the Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen, in his farewell address, “caste was peculiar to India, certainly in a religious sense it is, but in a social sense it perpetrates prodigious havoc in this country. Your rich people are really Brahmins, and your poor people are Pariahs.”

rooms as we enter their cottages, and preach them a gospel, and tell us how our vices looked from their point of view—denouncing luxury, and extravagance, and profligacy ; perhaps we need it equally, and perhaps were such a gospel preached, we should indeed feel that the poorer classes were not after all the most unworthy and the most immoral. If they had our advantages, and we had their temptations, how would the account stand ?

That if we had the Spirit of CHRIST we should be in earnest to do something more for the poor than we do now, is certain. In the days when the Church of CHRIST was yet young, and the story of CHRIST's life yet fresh, than there was an attempt to abolish the the distinction between rich and poor. It was a magnificent act of foolish generosity. It was an economic mistake, and God's laws make no provision for immunity when motives, however excellent, lead to their breach. But we, the heirs of all the ages' wisdom, might possibly copy the generosity, without imitating the folly. I hope we shall do so. Men are, I trust, stirring in the subject. When the intellect and the time are offered as a sacrifice as well as the money, then may we hope some good will be done. If ever we are disinclined to the task, let us think of Him, who though He was rich yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich.

East-London Pauperism.

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

December 20th, 1868.

PSALM civ., 23.

“Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour, until the evening.”

THIS Psalm is, as you will remember, an ode in praise of the economy of nature as ordered by God. The Poet shews what marvellous provision God has made for all living things; how all the forces of nature, and all the arrangements of the natural world are controlled and ordered for the benefit of those living creatures who find in it their home. Amongst other wonders on which he dwells, he speaks in this verse of the correlation of night and day, of labour and rest, by which God has arranged for the comfort of man—

the lord of Creation. In his review of creation he marks the wonderful counterpoise God has established; how storm and flood, the unvisited hill top and the barren glen, have all their place in the economy of the world; how, though the forces of nature be terrible as its face is beautiful, yet the forces which terrify as well as the features which please, are all directly useful. This leads him on to account for the apparent waste in the darkness of night; he shows its use for creation generally, and for man. And indeed, when we consider that a third part of our conscious life is spent in sleep, it seems at first sight as if some explanation were needed. The Psalmist sees in this fact the natural working of the law of labour and reward, of what we call work and wages. Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening, when he finds compensation for the daily drudgery of life, not only in the gorgeous scenery of dreamland, but also in the recreative power which enables him to resume his labour without fatigue. This verse may well conclude one of the strophes of the Psalm. The wonderful law by which God has made refreshment and recreation to depend on work, the marvellous reward He gives for work, is one of the chiefest blessings of this earth.

There are, however, exceptions to this as to all other laws; and just, as it would be possible to show,

that notwithstanding all the counterpoise of nature, there is much waste, much barrenness, much destruction ; so as regards man there is much work which is not solaced by sleep, much labour which goes utterly, so far as man can see, unrequited.

In an earlier state of society, in a fruitful Eastern climate, the whole question of labour was very easily solved. It might seem at first sight hard that one man should work whilst the other was born to riches ; but as no one could by any possibility starve, except in a time of famine, it was answer enough for the philosopher of those days to say, that God made up to the working man for his toil by sleep. "The sleep of the labouring man is sweet, whether he eat much or little, but the abundance of the rich man suffereth him not to sleep." But in our days the complications of the labour question are not so easily solved. There is a large mass of labour which finds no market, and a large mass which, being employed in the market, finds no just reward. The flood-tide of some prosperous trade casts a mass of labour on a certain place, and there is no natural ebb to carry it away. The whole tendency of trade now-a-days is to create a large demand for a certain manufacture, which is suddenly superseded, or suddenly fails. It is my lot to work in a part of London where the chronic state of the poor is that of extreme poverty,

where the labour market is always overstocked, and labour always underpaid. This result is brought about, not only by the failure of old staple trades, and the consequent decrease of employment and increase of rates (which have, within the last four years, risen from 2s. 6d. to 5s. 6d. in the £), but also by the constant determination of a large number of people to the metropolis, as the centre of England. Whether to make their fortune, or to hide their shame, whether to find that work which they fancy must exist in so large a city, or to lose themselves in that great wilderness of London life, where no one knows his next door neighbour's name, Englishmen and Foreigners, undeterred by the miserable experience of others, still crowd to London to add, in a short time, to the number of our poor. Living in the midst of poverty engendered by these causes, I make the very barest semblance of an apology for bringing before you in this place, generally devoted to the discussion of questions of speculative theology, a matter of practical life. If the question of poor relief be not one generally spoken of in the pulpit, we have at least the precedent of antiquity for its discussion in a religious way. It was the first great question which engaged the attention of the Church; out of it arose one of the orders of the clergy. It was a new question in those days, a question raised by the teaching and by the life of CHRIST. I believe I am right in saying

that before He came there was no such thing as systematic almsgiving; that hospitals, and the kindred institutions for the relief of the poor, whether voluntary or sanctioned by the law which first took its present shape in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are entirely of Christian growth. That Christianity which threw new life into older institutions, which raised and sanctified the commonest relations of life, created what we call charity, took up the heathen virtues of affection and love, baptized them, and sent them forth regenerated, with new Christian names.

The question with which we have to deal can hardly be entered upon without some detail of the nature of the poverty and of the class who suffer from it. I shall speak only of the poverty of East London, and attempt to show how the question affects us there. Mine is a parish containing some 11,000 souls, most of whom are supported by dock labour, or by other casual employment. Perhaps you could best judge of the lack of work if you were to watch them crowding, sometimes in hundreds around the dock gates, waiting far into the day because no man had hired them—waiting for the ugly rush which shall perchance admit them, or for the friendly nod of the foreman who shall choose them out of their fellows for one day's work. And this is repeated day after day, till one day, glorious to you

with the prospect of ice and of healthy exercise, they will not go down to the dock-gates, because it is of no use ; and day by day, aye and week by week, for it has lasted sometimes for weeks, they will stay at home to curse the wind which freezes the docks, or at least keeps the ships from coming up the river. But this is not all ; were it only that now and then in a very severe winter great distress prevailed, a remedy might be provided. This is indeed what makes some of us East-end clergy dread the coming winter like the return of some intermittent fever, not only for the actual misery it brings, but much more for the intoxicating stream of freehanded and indiscriminate charity which it makes to flow, and for the permanent pauperism which it creates ; but this is not what makes us despair of doing any good, this is not what paralyzes our work and makes it seem almost useless to do anything, when circumstances are so much against us and them. It is the chronic nature of the poverty as witnessed to by the wages even in the best times. I have spoken of the men who lounge round the dock-yard-gate, they are at least men, but what shall we say of the women, who have the same heavy burden to bear. Now, when I tell you that the needlework done by the large class of East-end sempstresses is paid at an average only of three farthings per hour,* clear wage, so that work-

* The actual wage is from 1*d.* to 1½*d.*, but needles and thread have to be supplied by the sempstress.

ing from twelve to eighteen hours it is difficult to make up one shilling a day, you will see that their case is a very sad one. But if they had always this ill-paid work to do, these poor creatures would be thankful, but such are the fluctuations of trade,* that they find it difficult to earn even this wretched sum. I have a census of a certain part of my parish, which I consider a fair specimen district, containing some 120 families, about 500 souls. I find, that taking their average wages, and deducting the amount paid in rent, there is a balance left of 3s. 2½d. per head; and taking out sixteen exceptional cases, the average remains at 2s. 9½d. per head for a week.† I calculate that if a person eat only 1lb of bread a day, with the necessary addition of a little grocery, &c., he could not live for less than 2s. 1d. per week; the balance of 8½d. therefore is left for clothing, fire and medicine. Do you wonder that people living on such wages as these, which barely keep them in necessary food, which leave hardly a margin for clothing, doctor's bills, or extraordinary expenses, who have the almost certainty that any summer accumulation will be

* It sounds strange to hear women complain that a long spell of fine weather has caused a stoppage in the demand for umbrellas, and left them without work.

† At the Whitechapel (Forest-gate) Union School the cost of the food for each child averages 2s. 11½d. per week.

spent before the winter is out—do you wonder that people reared under such influences as these, with no possibility of looking forward to an old age of comfort and respectability, should become careless and improvident, living from hand to mouth, utterly reckless of credit and appearance? Do you wonder that one sometimes loses heart, overwhelmed with the impossibility of raising to any high standard those who have to strive against such enormous social disadvantages? That is the first fact I wish you to bear in mind. There is a large class of poor all over the country, particularly congregated in London, who are improvident, unthrifty, and generally disreputable, who have been pressed out of the grade of respectable poverty by the force of circumstances.

There is another evil in connection with the present state of labour which we must examine. In an earlier state of society there are advantages arising out of labour, which in our complicated London life are not realized. There is an immense advantage in the social juxtaposition of the rich and the poor, in the intercourse between the refined and the uneducated, of which we know almost nothing. I do not speak of the direct benefits which the residence of the rich among the poor brings with it, by a larger expenditure, and by the demand for occasional labour, which would add so much to small annual receipts; that no

doubt filters down to us some way, through the ordinary channels of trade, though its effect is not evident. I am speaking of that influence on thought and manners, and education, which is insensibly exercised by their meeting together in any way. Much as I have valued the purely religious influence of Sunday-schools, I have often felt in other places that their social results were not less important. Much as I value the good work of those who from time to time come from the West to the East to do offices of kindness, I feel that this can never make up for the want of their residence among us. Machinery, and all the mechanism of business, severs the capitalist from the labourer; there is no longer that insensible education and elevation arising out of the intercourse between the master-workman and the craftsman; it is only the lower order of employers who see of their workmen as much as the farmer sees of his labourers, and the landlord of his tenants. And this not only in business hours, for (following the example of the rich) their employers, so soon as they begin to prosper live out in the country, coming up only for the day to their work; so that those who set the tone of life to the neighbourhood are often the least worthy so to do. There has been a feeling against the local boards of London; I believe the feeling to be in the main unjust; I have met a large number of men at these boards as highminded as I have ever met in any

place, and the business is chiefly in their hands. But that there is sometimes a lower tone than we can approve about their transactions arises from the fact that they are in the main composed of men who have not yet acquired that independence of thought, which seems somehow or other (however unwilling we may be to confess it,) to go with independence of position. Now consider the reflex action of their life on those with whom they live. And yet it is from a lower class than these that the working men take their tone. The severance between the rich and the poor is to me an even sadder thing than the wretched state of the labour market. I can fancy a remedy possible for the one, I can foresee no remedy for the other. The gap between them seems widening every day, as trade and land fall into the hands of large capitalists, who absorb all smaller concerns, all smaller holdings.

And now I come to my practical point—to that which has made me face you to-day, and preach to you from whom I ought to learn. I wish to bespeak your attention to these two great evils, and to ask you to give your leisure, your thought, your experience, to remedy them. I come here to show you these two great social sores, and ask you to use your skill to heal them. Unskilful practitioners have tried their hands to cure one, at least, they have but made it worse. I lay the case before you, reverend doctors

and masters, and bespeak your aid. There is first the great difficulty of the mass of poor whose labour goes unrewarded. I speak of London chiefly, as of the most prominent instance, but the evil is the same in various degrees all over the country. There is a large amount of suffering at one end of London, there is a large amount of charity and money at the other. How are the two to be brought into harmonious conjunction, so that the one may supply the deficiencies of the other? That is a problem which many have tried to solve, but hitherto they have only made the evil worse. The amount of charity which has flowed from the West to the East has demoralised the clergy and pauperised the yet honest poor. It has demoralised the East-end clergy,* who have become a set of mendicant friars, making capital out of every interesting case, constantly appealing in the public press, doing everything to shift the burden off the shoulders which ought to bear it, always ready to help the poor in their misery, instead of trying to do their best to lift them out of it; revelling in the importance which the receipt of money from great folk gives them, and too often wasting it in an indiscriminate distribution of tickets to the poor who crowd round their door, or making in some form attendance at a place of worship

* The protest of the Clergy of the Rural Deanery of Stepney shows that I am not solitary in my views; with them I would confine the relief administered by the Clergy to cases of sickness.

a condition of relief. We speak that we do know. It has pauperised the honest poor. When a poor man has struggled hard through the best part of a winter, at a cost of infinite self-sacrifice, can there be any more devilish temptation than to scatter relief by handfuls, and let him know that here or there it may be had for the asking? to let him see his worthless neighbours come home well provided; nay, to go and visit from house to house and ask whether he will not have it? Of course men succumb to the temptation, and, having fallen, they become for ever improvident paupers. No one knows what a wrench it is to a man who has sent every article of value to the poor man's bank, the much-abused pawnshop—without which I know not how the poor could live—no one knows what a wrench it is for him, for the first time, to become beholden to charity; and yet, once let him yield to pressure, and he becomes, in nine cases out of ten, a whining suppliant, ready to cringe for all he can get. The most terrible part of want is not the physical misery it entails, it is the moral degradation which too often results from it, which makes it so very terrible. I am sad as I think over cases which rise to my mind, and as I think of them I say, "Woe be to the man who makes relief too easy, who puts temptation in their way; it must be that occasions of falling will come, but woe be to the man by whom they come." And yet there ought to be some way in which redundant

capital might be made to supply the lack of employment and of wages. One only attempt has been made to carry this out on sound principle, and that attempt marred, to my mind at least, by the introduction of religious teaching as a condition of relief. One large society gives relief by means of work, but at work religious teaching is enforced. It is useless for the supporters to say that they tamper with no man's creed; so long as they make religion the condition of relief to starving folk, the weak and the hypocrites will take it, and sink lower and lower; the honest and independent will starve rather than touch it. And further, if there is any discipline in the teaching of life, if God does at all educate men by the trials of life, it would be most mischievous to carry even this principle of finding work for all these in trouble too far; if, directly a man threw himself out of employment, if, notwithstanding that he had recklessly wasted his wages, he could always find labour enough to keep him, the whole training of life would be gone. The marvel of CHRIST's life is His repression of His powers of beneficence. If we try and imitate Him in going about doing good, we must be careful, as He was, that the objects of our mercy are well chosen, and will be raised, not degraded, by our kindness.

There are two very favourite remedies for the evils of which I have spoken—emigration and a centralized

poor-law. Do not trust too much to either. It may savour too much of selfishness to argue that emigration is a suicidal policy, and yet we might fairly argue that a proceeding which robs the land of its best men and women, for the strongest and the most sober will of necessity be chosen, is unwise; but there is this fatal objection, that it is a policy which is not capable of indefinite extension. ' We shall soon have from the colonists remonstrance against the landing of emigrants, as we already have had a protest against the transport of criminals. The land will not bear both emigrants and settlers. Nor can I see how any mere revisal of the poor-law will remedy the evil. Much may be effected, no doubt, by doing away with that system which now prevails, of regarding every man who applies for relief as a vagabond till he has proved himself deserving, a system which breaks the spirit of the man who has found himself obliged at last to apply to the parish; much, too, may be done by substituting for the present system of unprofitable and degrading stone-yard labour, a labour which shall be like that now employed in prisons useful, and therefore* not in its tendency degrading; much also by

* I am not unaware of the economical difficulties, but if the law of unprofitable labour were to be strictly enforced, you would keep all paupers within the house, with arms folded; washing and cleaning must be done by others.

declaring a certain class of pauperism to be criminal, so as to prevent the worthless from benefiting by this milder law, but this will not be enough. A central administration of relief will fail in its object, for it must of necessity make the law harder, and you cannot deal with the niceties of character involved in the relief of the poor by an inflexible rule. Much as the non-resident system has done away with the benefit which was intended to result from committing the relief of the poor to those who lived among them, and therefore knew something of them, there still remains good enough in the principle to make one dread any plan which should supersede it by a machinery which is all head and no heart, and so centralization, a pleasing theory I allow, will not answer. No! the problem has yet to be solved how justice and mercy are to meet together on this great question; but in these days, when men have learned at last that it is possible to found practical measures on the most abstract speculation, I am not without hope that the question may yet find a solution. And with whom can I leave it better than with you, most of whom are directly engaged in the education of those before whom, as legislators, proprietors, or employers, the question will come.

I have dwelt long on the first difficulty, I have but little to say on the second—the severance between

the rich, and the poor. This, as I have said, seems to defy remedy. Perhaps some great scheme of national education may throw the rich and the poor together in their younger days, perhaps some change in the relations of society and of labour may throw the poor into intercourse with the rich—at present the severance between the two is one of the most painful facts I have learnt. It is a fact, the full evils of which we do not yet know. These have been, in the main, prosperous times; great as was the distress caused by the crisis of 1866, a distress from which we have barely yet recovered, the country has been on the whole prosperous. Should a severe time of prolonged scarcity come, I tremble for the consequences. The year before last, private charity as administered by special relief committees flowed freely, the wages at the stone-yard had been doubled, and everything possible was being done for the poor. Their attitude was not, however, at all pleasant; and one day,* when a body of police had been kept in reserve in the Whitechapel Union during the sitting of the board, some one suggested to those outside, that there were butchers' and bakers' shops in plenty; an onslaught was made, and whilst the guardians were receiving applications and dealing with them as best

* I mention the presence of the police in the workhouse only to show the temper of the paupers.

they could, their clients were helping themselves to bread which could be obtained without the stone-yard test, and to meat gotten without labour made profitless in order to make it disagreeable. This shows what may happen. I look, and would have you look, with great anxiety, on the present state of society, which allows the poor to know of the rich only what they learn from the public papers.

Two remarks in reference to what has gone before. I have spoken of the distress. I am thankful to be able to say that the worst pressure has for the time passed away. You need not, I think, fear much for the coming winter. Our trade is brisker, and I have some £80 more in my penny bank than I had at this time last year. There will indeed be increased pauperism for many years, arising from the evils of the present systems of relief and charity—there ought to be no absolute distress. But when the state of things which I have tried to describe to you can be spoken of as an improvement on the past, I leave you to judge whether there be not subject for the most earnest consideration.

I have spoken also of the low tone of morality among the poor. I must do them justice—I cannot speak of their religion; what it is, as tested by the ordinary standard, I know not. God forbid that

jealousy or any party feeling should make me grudge to any one the honour of having influenced the poor, but I say distinctly that as yet no party in the church has gained them. There may be a successful man here and there who has his hold on a few. For the mass you must look, not in the church, but in the street. That there are a few hundreds here and there no more proves that as a class they are church-goers, than the existence of one thousand caged birds proves that canaries are naturalized in England; they are snared, they are bribed, they are enticed, some may even like the cage; it is in no sense to them, as a class, a home. Yet, do not think that they are altogether bad. One virtue they develop in such a way that one is proud to call them fellow men—they are kind, they are generous to a fault; they will almost starve to help others; there is no lack of deeds of generosity and self-sacrifice, of unseen and unknown kindness, not trumpeted in society, nor advertised next morning in the papers, which might well perhaps make some of us blush. I have heard it said that “there are streets in London so poor that no one would beg in them.” That is a statement which must have been made by some one who had been little among the poor. Those who trade on the weakness of humanity know a great deal better than to avoid the poorest streets. It sounds strange, but I believe that the receipts must be in inverse ratio to

the prosperity of the street. Certain it is, that in our poverty-stricken end of London, where there are no crossing-sweepers, there are beggars enough to show that it must be a profitable trade. And sometimes, as I see these poor pushing a piece of bread into the hand of a beggar, as if half ashamed to give so little, and hear the money thrown out rattle on the pavement, I think that if HE were on earth still, HE would say to many a one of whom I have thought hardly, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of Heaven."

It is in the interest of such as these that I ask you to consider those questions which I have raised. He who will study them will deserve well of this country as well as of that greater country, for the citizenship of which we are under training here.

We have been looking at an exception to the rule, but that does not alter the law—that work is followed by reward, that the workman is worthy of his hire. Let us go forth to our work and labour till the evening. That very exception of which I have spoken suggests a field of work which is in much need of labourers. You know for whom we work and how certain is the reward. That old familiar story tells how, when Adam wearied with his day's work went to sleep unsatisfied with his toil, because for

him in that glorious creation no help-meet was found, he woke and found beside him one who realized his highest wishes—a parable surely that to us, teaching us that work shall ever be followed by reward, often when we least expect it, often even when we have laid ourselves down weary because our work seemed thrown away. The evening is drawing on; another advent season is gone. Let us work in the full confidence that after work, if not in work, God shall give us our reward; then, when we fall asleep, we too may perchance realize Adam's vision, and wake up to find ourselves in the presence of Him, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, Whom here we seek, and that sometimes in vain.



